

COMMENTARIES
 ON THE
TREATMENT
 OF
THE VENEREAL DISEASE,
 PARTICULARLY
 IN ITS EXASPERATED STATE;
 INCLUDING
 A SECOND EDITION OF A FORMER PUBLICATION ON THAT
 SUBJECT, CONSIDERABLY AUGMENTED AND IMPROVED.
 ON THE
USE OF MERCURY,
 SO AS TO INSURE ITS SUCCESSFUL EFFECT.
 With an Appendix,
 ON
STRICTURES OF THE URETHRA ;
 AND ON
 MORBID RETENTION OF URINE.



BY **EDWARD GEOGHEGAN,**
*MEMBER OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF SURGEONS IN IRELAND,
 HONORARY MEMBER OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL SOCIETY, EDINBURGH,
 AND OF THE PHYSICO CHIRURGICAL SOCIETY, DUBLIN.*

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TO JOHN PEARSON, Esq.

SIR,

ANXIOUS to engage the attention of a competent judge of the following pages, I take the liberty of Dedicating them to you, to whom the Profession is so much indebted, for the talents you have manifested in Medical Surgery, and the earnestness with which you have insisted on its superior advantages.

To the improved state of our knowledge, in this respect, the present subject owes every thing; and indeed there is no disease that is the object of surgical

DEDICATION.

aid, the event of which may not be decided by skill, or deficiency in this particular.

The principles and practice for which I contend, are the result of experience, and of observation, and my confidence in them will be still further strengthened, if they shall be sanctioned by your approbation. I am,

SIR,

With respect and regard,

Your obedient humble Servant,

EDWARD GEOGHEGAN.

DUBLIN, North Earl-Street, }
February 1st, 1814. }

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PREFACE.

THE following Commentaries contain a second edition of a publication that appeared in the year 1802, also farther observations on the treatment of the venereal disease.

Having revised and corrected the part that was published before, I presume, that my opinions will be more clearly understood, than the first edition admitted of, the many inaccuracies of which obscured my meaning,

and subjected me to be often misconceived : I have also enlarged on the subject considerably, availing myself of farther experience and reflection. Some observations are added, on the means of preventing the destruction of the uvula and palate, when ulcerated ; and on the use of mercury, so as to ensure its successful effect.

The drift and tendency of my first publication, were to mark the ill consequences of the abuse of this medicine, and to point out the particular circumstances under which it ought, and ought not to be administered.

Views of the subject in many respects the same of mine, have been since published by others ; I am, therefore, anxious still farther to investigate it, in the hope of contributing

with my fellow-labourers in the healing art, to such settlement of the practice, as may prevent the abuse, and conduce to more general success. In the course of my observations, I shall have occasion to animadvert on the opinions of the most respectable authorities, particularly the late John Hunter, whose splendid talents, and unceasing labours for the improvement of his profession, furnish a noble example, and entitle his memory to veneration ; it is on practical points chiefly, that I differ with him, and I hold it a duty to contest whatever appears to me to be erroneous, in this respect. Some of the speculative opinions of Mr. Abernethy, strike me as not satisfactory ; however, his practical rules furnish valuable guides, and can not be too strongly inculcated. Whilst I consider Mr. Hunter's Treatise as abounding with

suggestions of great value to the experienced practitioner, I by no means esteem it a safe guide to the inexperienced.

The difficulties with which the treatment of the venereal disease is so often embarrassed, invite still farther discussion, and require the application of the best talents and information in the medical profession. It has always excited my surprise, that the physician directs his attention so little to this disease, and that systems of medicine refer to surgical writers for a particular account of it ; its treatment certainly includes much surgery, and he who is the best Medico Chirurgon, will be the most competent to it ; it is deeply to be regretted that so much of the practice devolves on unqualified persons, as there is no affliction to which human infirmity

is liable, the effectual cure of which is so very important.

The most practicable mode of discouraging the unqualified, is to encrease the number of qualified persons, and to impress the public with a sense of the attainments necessary to treat the disease. The regular physician therefore, should feel it his duty to attend in venereal cases; it is in general a *constitutional* disease, and within *his* province, as well as the surgeon's. The division of the healing art into physic and surgery, I am persuaded, impedes the improvement of both; they are certainly united in theory, and the more closely they are connected in practice, with the more safety and advantage will the healing art be exercised; of this the evidence is abundant, and is strik-

ingly exemplified in the works of Abernethy. Indeed division and distinction are ill suited to the members of a profession, whose object is the same, the restoration of health, and which stands superior to every other, whether its usefulness to mankind, or the elevated nature of its studies are contemplated.

COMMENTARIES, &c.

WHEN we reflect on the many and various phenomena which the science of medicine exhibits ; the wide and extensive range of philosophical consideration it embraces, we cannot be surprized that the nature and treatment of diseases should be involved in great difficulty, and, indeed, often in obscurity.

It is greatly to be lamented that authors and teachers are not sufficiently minute and circumspect, in detailing the variety of circumstances that influence the healing art, and constantly occur in medical and surgical cases; the particular attention of the ancients in this respect, should furnish a valuable lesson; they had no other lights but their own observations; and daily experience evinces, that attentive observation is the only path to judicious practice. It is pertinently remarked by Doctor Friend, “ That a man may practise and practise all the days of his life, and yet be never the wiser for his experience, if he neglects to make the proper observations which that experience might suggest to him; and it is not very likely he should be over nice in his observations, who constantly goes on in his first track, and has

no other scheme but his own narrow notions in his view."

The precepts of the venerable father of medical science, Hippocrates, manifest the importance of a vigilant observance of nature's laws ; their sagacity will ever afford an instructive example to practical men ; for however the speculative may contest about systems, the principles of the healing art are immutable, and those physical laws which are beyond human control, and which command our observance, are the only safe beacons by which to direct our course.

It has often occurred to me in practice, and when consulting professional authorities, that in accounting for the phenomena of disease, many important considera-

tions were overlooked, which, if minutely attended to, would materially influence the practice. Sydenham, with his wonted accuracy and judgement, remarks, "There are diseases that come under the same genus, bear the same name, and have the same symptoms in common, which, notwithstanding, being of a different nature, require a different treatment."——These remarks of this inestimable authority, are exemplified in almost every disease to which the human body is subject, whether arising spontaneously or produced by accident.

I propose to consider some symptoms attendant on the venereal disease, the nature and treatment of which, I think, are not well understood; and I am the more desirous of entering into the investigation, finding that the most respectable modern authorities are

not only undecided in their opinions, but inculcate a practice, which appears to me highly injudicious, and from which I have witnessed the most destructive consequences.

The variety of forms this disease exhibits, and the symptoms of extraordinary malignity that occasionally occur, involve its treatment in considerable difficulty; there is scarcely a disease it does not resemble in some of its features, and there is no plan of treatment laid down in books, which is not often contradicted; and these, I believe, happen much more frequently in the venereal than in any other disease; hence in investigating its phenomena, an extensive field of research presents itself; and, indeed, we have to lament, that in considering the modifications of this disease, practition-

ers, heretofore, have calculated by so very limited a scale.

Although every form the venereal disease exhibits, furnishes ample matter for observation. I shall confine myself to some aggravated symptoms, in the treatment of which I have had considerable experience, and which have given rise to these reflections; I particularly allude to phymosis in the inflammatory stage, and to phagedenic chancre, and I know of no symptom, the event of which is more interesting, as they frequently terminate in the destruction of a part, or of the entire penis;—for some time back my attention has been directed to this point, but the number of cases which occurred during the summer, autumn, and winter, of 1799, particularly excited my astonishment, and on communicating with other

practitioners, I found that they met with similar instances in a far greater number during the same time, than at any former period : as to the nature and treatment of the complaint, the opinions generally entertained, were different from those I had formed:

It was remarked by the public, that the venereal disease then raging, appeared to be singularly malignant ; and I have heard even practitioners say, that they thought there was an unusual degree of virulence in the infection. The appearance which gave rise to these remarks, was violent tumefaction of the penis, often terminating in mortification, particularly when injudiciously treated ; other symptoms were also observable, as singular for intensity of degree.

Although I was always of the opinion which I now maintain, as to the theory and practice ; the many instances which occurred within so short a time, having afforded farther, and still more satisfactory opportunity for observation, I was led, with increased confidence, to question the propriety of the practice recommended, and generally pursued.

When the ordinary symptoms of an infectious disease, appear to be exasperated in an unusual degree ; the question arises, to what are we to attribute this increased degree ? Whether to increased acrimony of the poison, or to any adventitious or physical causes, insensibly operating ; this is the pivot, upon which the point of practice must turn. If to the former, mercury is the remedy ; but if to the latter, many and various circum-

stances are to be taken into consideration, which are too frequently overlooked ; there is nothing more common than to attribute those venereal appearances, which resist the effects of mercury, or are increased whilst it is administered, to an original morbid condition of the habit, and the plan of treatment is the administration of bark, opium, wine, to which mercury is conjoined by some. Decoctions of the woods, and sea bathing, are also very much used, and these means are recommended by authors, and very generally pursued in a kind of routine, as if they had a specific operation in all diseases which had a venereal origin.

Before I proceed to inquire into the causes, which, I conceive, are but little attended to, in accounting for the modifications of this disease, I think it necessary to notice the

opinions and practice of Mr. John Hunter ; respecting phymosis, he says, "That when this tumefaction takes place, in consequence of a chancre, he suspects there is an irritable disposition in the habit ; for it is plain, there is more than the specific action, the inflammation extending beyond the specific distance."

In his direction for the constitutional treatment, he seems a good deal perplexed ; his words are, "In those cases, where violent inflammation has attacked the seat of a chancre, producing phymosis, as before described, and often so as to threaten mortification, a question arises ; is mercury to be given freely, to get rid of the first cause ? nothing but experience can determine this. I should incline to believe, that it is necessary that mercury should be given, for I am afraid our powers to correct such a constitution, whilst

the first cause subsists, are too weak ; however, on the other hand, I believe the mercury should be given sparingly, for if it assists in disposing the constitution to such symptoms, we are gaining nothing, and may lose by its use ; I therefore do suppose, that such medicines as may be thought necessary for the constitution, should be given liberally, as well as the specific ; bark is the medicine that probably will be of most general use ; opium, in most cases of this kind, will be of singular service ; the bark should be given in large quantities, and along with it mercury, whilst the virus is supposed to exist ; or if the inflammation has arisen early in the disease, they may then be given together, so as to counteract both diseases, and not to allow the inflammation to come to so great an height as it would otherwise do, if mercury was given at first alone ; this

inflammation may be so great in many cases, or be so predominant, that mercury may increase the disposition, and, therefore, become hurtful; where this may be supposed to be the case, bark must be given alone." These are his observations in full, as to the constitutional treatment in cases of phymosis; what is to be inferred from them as a practical guide, I am at a loss to discover; he puts a case of inflammation, threatening mortification; after expressing many doubts as to the propriety of the medicine, he advises mercury, but that it should be given *sparingly*, lest it should do *harm*; in the next lines he recommends it, accompanied with bark and opium, and concludes, by saying it may become *hurtful*, in the very cases in which he advises it. From these equivocal and inconsistent opinions, it is evident that this ingenious practitioner had not determined on any

fixed principle, as to the nature of the complaint, or the mode of treating it ; the surgeon who gives mercury, and he who rejects it, as improper in this threatened mortification, are alike sanctioned by his authority ; he also advises in the local treatment, to inject mercurials, even corrosive sublimate, in the proportion of one grain to an ounce of water, and other mercurials, inside the prepuce, to remain in contact with the parts ; but concludes by saying that he has his *doubts* as to the propriety of using any irritating applications in such cases. Of this more hereafter.

With respect to the question, whether increased acrimony of the poison, has any share in producing these aggravated symptoms ? Here it is necessary to take a view of the effects usually attendant on its application in

the first instance :—when applied to a non-secreting surface, ulceration is the usual consequence, and although this state is accompanied by some degree of inflammation, yet it is rather circumscribed, and the ulcerative process, goes on more rapidly than the inflammatory, and indeed the latter is often totally absent. Females having the slightest appearances without any inflammatory symptom, ignorant, indeed, of being infected, constantly communicate the disease, and the persons whom they have infected, show the disease in various degrees and forms ; in one man it will exhibit the most trivial, in another the most violent symptoms, although both have been infected by the same woman, and at nearly the same time. * Taken into the stomach, it produces no effect, and even

* Mr. Hunter mentions that a person drank milk by mistake, that contained a quantity of venereal matter, and no ill effect followed.

proves harmless to many persons who expose themselves to it ; it also remains in the habit for years, without manifesting itself, or exciting the least disturbance. In the small pox, we every day see the same infection produce the disease, in one subject, in the mildest, in another, in the most malignant form. These facts establish the principle most unequivocally, that mild or violent symptoms, whether accompanied by inflammation, or ulceration, or in whatever form they appear, are not characteristic of the degree of acrimony in the infectious matter ; hence we have no reason for attributing the aggravated state, to the infectious matter alone ; we are led then to look for an explanation of the phenomenon, from some other cause. It is a common phrase, when things run untowardly, to say, this is owing to *peculiarity of constitution* ; but in what this pe-

culiarity consists, we are uninformed, and of course, are without any guide as to the treatment. Whilst I agree that the true source of the mischief is in the state of the constitution, I cannot but express my astonishment at the narrow view that is generally taken of this very material point; one would think from the plans of cure laid down, and usually followed, that this condition of body meant something fixed and definite, not that fluctuating state which is liable to vary with every breeze.

Surely in considering the human constitution, the great variety of circumstances which influence it every moment, are to be taken into the account,—the state of the air, place of residence, disposing to diseases of different types; intemperance, effects of the passions, habits of life, exercise, where rest is required;

also local irritation, and many other causes of interrupting the health, which it is impossible to recount, and all which have their share in exasperating diseases, and in changing their form. Many alterations may take place in the constitution, during the treatment of the venereal disease, from some of the causes enumerated, in which state, mercury would be contraindicated; when the penis becomes the seat of disease, its sensibility is preternaturally increased; should any additional cause of disease operate locally, or generally, at the same time, it is obvious that the diseased part will feel its effects in a greater degree than any other, and inflammation be produced, which may take place, whether chancre exists or not, as in gonorrhea; and chancres may spread and exhibit the most malignant features, independently of the virus. In farther illustration, I will suppose

a case of chancre attended with slight symptoms, and that by accident, the part is suddenly struck, and violent symptoms ensued; are we not to judge of the latter, *quoad injuriam*, and would it not be error in the extreme, to treat this case as venereal during the recent symptoms? And is it not manifest, that the same effects may be produced through the medium of the constitution; do we not every day, see the most violent diseases come on suddenly from an accession of cold, and affecting particularly such parts as were previously in a morbid state. Persons who are subject to diseases of the urinary organs, gout, rheumatism, ophthalmia, sore throat, &c. &c. expect a visit from their old complaints, at these seasons, when the weather is remarkably variable, as in spring and autumn. Hippocrates observes, “*Mutationes temporum maxime pariunt morbos, it in ipsis tem-*

poribus, magnæ mutationes aut frigoris aut æstus, aliaque congruentur rationi eodem modo.”

At these periods, when catarrh (which is often occasioned by an epidemic constitution of the air) is a frequent disease, it is observed, that pre-existing diseases are increased, and that the prevailing epidemic manifests itself in a variety of forms; Sydenham remarks, “that at the time of an epidemic, every other disorder, in some measure, participates of the nature of the reigning epidemic.” All the accounts we have of diseases arising from the state of the atmosphere, give instances of the variety of forms in which they appear, although the prevailing disease was catarrh erysipelas, often terminating in gangrene, and death; also palsies, convulsions, sudden deaths, mania, &c.—See Dr.

Fothergil of Bath, in 3d vol. of *Memoirs of the Medical Society of London*, on the *Influenza* in 1775. Drs. Gray and Carmichael Smyth, in *Medical Communications*, vol. 1 and 2; Dr. Gilchrist, in *Physical and Literary Essays*, vol. 3, on the Epidemic of 1762; Dr. Sims on Epidemics. Hillary on the Influence of Air on Diseases in the West Indies, a most desirable field for investigations of this kind, observed, "That boils and large imposthumations, were epidemic at times, and that most cases of catarrhal fever, were attended with inflammation of one leg, and that in many it did not attack the bronchia and lungs, but that in some particular constitutions, it fell upon such other parts of the body, as were either naturally weaker, or had been rendered so by some preceding disease, and then it produced some different symptoms, such as are peculiar to those parts

upon which it fell, when they are disordered, and consequently required some different methods of treatment." Dr. Gardiner on the Animal Economy, in his Essay on Catarrh, illustrates this point with great effect; he quotes a passage from the late Dr. Clerk of Edinburgh, in a letter to Sir John Pringle, in which he says, "that in passing through a wet room, his legs turned stiff, which stiffness sometimes ascended gradually, until it affected his left kidney, or tonsil, his two weak parts." During the epidemic that prevailed in Paris, in 1747 and 48, it was observed that gangrene often succeeded fractures, and other external injuries.

Kirkland seemed to think that abscesses in the fingers were sometimes epidemic; he says, "it is remarkable, that many of these abscesses happen at the same time, and in the same

manner, that we see sore eyes, &c. prevail in particular seasons.”

The Medical and Chirurgical Review for 1806, contains the following extract from the *Journal de Medicine*, vol. 8, of a paper by M. Brugerius, formerly surgeon in chief to the army of Italy. “The military hospital of Toulon, the situation of which is low and close, proved formerly little better than a tomb for most of the patients admitted, and especially such as laboured under syphilis, the greater number of inflammatory venereal symptoms terminating in gangrene; phymosis and paraphimosis were often followed by a total loss of the penis, the mortification sometimes spreading into the neighbouring parts. Gangrene also frequently seized on ulcerated blubos, spreading along the thigh, or the abdomen, and sometimes des-

stroying all the external parts of generation. Struck with the alarming appearances which no art could remedy, M. Brugerius visited the military hospitals of the North, for the purpose of observing whether the venereal disorders in them, were subject to similar accidents ; the contrary was found to be the case, and M. B. therefore, justly attributed their occurrence at Toulon, to local causes. In fact, when the wards of the hospital were raised, and ventilation strictly attended to, these gangrenes ceased to make their appearance ;” a striking proof of the great importance of pure air in the treatment of diseases.

That the principle contended for, is admitted by every medical man of reflection, there cannot be a question, and I presume that its application in explaining the phenomena under consideration, is obvious. I

have already explained how diseases of the penis may be aggravated, independently of the virus, which has no share in the disease, only in as much as it predisposes the part to be acted on by the remote causes; this is also most satisfactorily shown, by a very usual circumstance, namely, the occurrence of these violent symptoms, at a period when the system is fully under the influence of mercury, and the sores nearly healed; a morbid condition of body also is induced by the use of mercury, which renders it peculiarly liable to adventitious diseases. These observations apply to every form and stage of the disease, all which may be aggravated under similar circumstances; and I hold it, that violent tumefaction of the penis is always produced in this way, namely, by external causes, and sometimes accompanied by the deleterious properties of mercury; the extraordinary

frequency of this complaint, at the time before mentioned, tells strongly in favour of this rationale; the Summer, Autumn, and Winter, of 1799, furnish ample and melancholy proofs of the existence of a cause sufficient to derange the animal machine; a season so unpropitious, as to have increased the mass of human misery in these countries, to a degree afflicting and awful indeed. The order of the physical world must have been inverted, were not diseases influenced by that state of the weather, which proved so universally destructive to vegetation, from the 27th of June to the 17th of November, there were only eight days free from rain, nearly five months; although it does not appear that the prevalence of any particular epidemic was marked, yet the ordinary diseases of every class were evidently increased, in number and degree; remarkably obstinate

rheumatisms were very prevalent in every part of the empire ; also dysenteries, ophthalmia, and measles of a very bad kind ; the natural consequence of piercing winds acting on our bodies, now and then exposed to hot sunshine. We are informed, through the Medical and Physical Journal, that so general and fatal was typhus fever in London, that some places were nearly depopulated, and that the mortality was double what it had been at former periods. It may not be unworthy notice, that disease raged very generally among horses, during that year ; and it is a fact, that at the time of epidemics, great mortality has been observed among them and other animals.

It is admitted that inflammation of the penis, such as I describe, is erysipelatous, and we know that erysipelas is an usual at-

tendant upon epidemic causes ; and when it is considered that venereal patients are very numerous, and that they are very much exposed to the weather, surely when many diseases are produced, and all are aggravated by the state of the atmosphere, it is a fair induction that a number of persons labouring under the venereal disease, will be affected by the prevailing epidemic, and that it will produce its effects as before explained ; namely, by inflaming those parts which were previously in a morbid state. In this way, I think that the exasperated symptoms so frequent in the year 1799, may be accounted for. I have been informed by Mr. Henthorn, senior surgeon to the hospital called the Lock, that an extraordinary number of these cases presented themselves there at this period, but that they were of the putrid type, particularly among females ; mortifications

were very common, set in early, and often proved fatal. Giving this Gentleman's opinions their full force, (and I know of no authority entitled to more respectful attention,) still, they do not oppose the principle contended for, namely, that the symptoms were almost invariably inflammatory; the bad air of an hospital, particularly of one appropriated to the treatment of the venereal disease, where between two and three hundred persons are using mercury, many with foul ulcers, and most of them with a noxious foëtor from their mouths, will soon take down the inflammatory diathesis, and cast an opposite type; besides, before the poor get into an hospital, they are debilitated from disease, anxiety, and want of food; and their cases become totally different from those of persons who breathe better air, live fully, &c. &c.

In some subjects and diseases, the distance between those states termed the sthenic, and asthenic, is very short, particularly in very acute cases, and I know of no point of practice which puts our sagacity more to the test ; a bold and decided practice at the commencement of inflammatory complaints, may at once check their progress ; whilst an imbecile and temporizing course, will as certainly protract them, and favour every morbid propensity. Although every case I attended was inflammatory, and seemed to have arisen from cold affecting the constitution, sometimes together with other stimuli, generally or locally applied, or both, and were relieved by immediate and plentiful evacuations ; yet I will not say, but that cases might have occurred, in which the previous state of the habit, and the operation of certain incidental causes, rendered a different plan of treatment

judicious; but from every information I could collect, and from my own experience, the antiphlogistic plan was generally indicated during that season in particular, and I believe that it is so, in most instances of the symptom in question,

I am of opinion that local irritation also has a great share in producing those attacks; when we consider the high degree of sensibility of the penis, and this condition morbidly increased by the poison, and its being pendulous, and very liable to motion, it is obvious, that it must be often irritated by striking against the breeches, &c. &c. and when the sores are small, little attention is paid to the means of obviating such injuries; suppose one of the fingers having some small ulcers, although free from virulence, and that it was unprotected and pendulous,

without bandage or dressing, coming in contact with foreign bodies, surely diffused inflammation might reasonably be expected; how much more susceptible is the penis of injury, from a similar cause?—We have the testimony of almost every early writer, that inflammation of the penis, often terminating in mortification, was common among the ancients. Celsus gives particular directions as to its treatment, recommends strict regimen, fomentations, and suspending the part, which he thinks necessary in all its disorders; he speaks of the glans falling off, and advises amputation in some cases. In the 5th vol. of the Edinburgh Medical Essays, there is a case of a young man in Scotland, who had a gonorrhea, and after being under cure near six or seven weeks, mortification took place, attended with high inflammatory symptoms; amputation was performed, and after repeated

bleedings, the symptoms yielded, and his sores healed; what is particularly noticed in this case, is, that the glans were regenerated. It is worthy remark, that there is no mention of chancre, or any venereal appearance but gonorrhea. Inflammation of the penis attendant on gonorrhea, is noticed by most authors: the following observations of Boerhaave, show that he dreaded the worst consequences, from adding to the irritability of these parts when in a diseased state. "Whatever the Cook, the Vintner, or the Apothecary, can supply to the irritation of venery: whatever has a tendency to tickle the prurient fancy, whether the company of the fair sex, or lewd pictures, or wanton conversations, or lascivious reading; all such provocations and allurements must be shunned as certain death." The circumstance of this violent inflammation accompanying gonorrhea, merits

particular attention, because this latter disease is curable without the antidote to the venereal virus, mercury; and as showing that the existence of chancre is unnecessary to the production of the former, and that a morbid state of the penis, from whatever cause, is sufficient; indeed it is impossible that a decided opinion can be formed, on the first view of a violently inflamed, or mortified penis, as to the original disease, therefore we are not warranted in giving a medicine, which is adapted to the doubtful, and highly prejudicial to the manifest disease.

A case was communicated to me in the year 1799, of a young man who was using mercury for chancres, and when they were nearly healed, a dressing of the ung. eruginis was applied to a small sore that proved obstinate; inflammation succeeded, the dose of

mercury was increased, mortification took place ; two surgeons of great experience were employed, they advised calcined mercury to be given, instead of the ointment ; the mischief increased, all the neighbouring parts were destroyed, and it proved fatal ; correctness requires that I should mention he was ordered bark, opium, cicuta, &c. This patient was of a delicate and irritable habit, disposed to partake rapidly of diseased action ; the verdegris applied in the form of ointment, remained in constant contact with the part, and undoubtedly produced the mischief. About the same time I met with several cases in which the sores were trivial, with every appearance of their being immediately healed, the habit fully under the influence of mercury, when unaccountably and suddenly the penis became greatly tumefied, and all *those* who persevered in the use of mercury, or took

bark and wine, suffered a rapid destruction of parts ; I remarked that almost all these patients were exposed to the weather, and some of them to great exercise ; in one case it was produced by the application of a strong solution of corrosive muriate of mercury, to remove warts ; in another the inflammation had set in but thirty-six hours, and the penis was completely sphacelated when I first saw him ; this patient was using mercurial frictions, and allowed to drink wine, and pursue what is called the invigorating plan, whilst in this state ; he was of a robust habit, and in the twenty-first year of his age, and had considerable symptomatic fever ; I directed that the mercury should be discontinued, and reversed the treatment ; on which the general and local symptoms yielded ; but it was too late to save the penis, a great portion of it having separated. In many instances delirium

and considerable fever attended, which seemed to me to have been indiopathic, and although influencing, yet not arising from the local disease. Turner gives a case of a man, “who, after a debauch, was seized with a shivering fit, succeeded by fever; inflammation of the penis, and mortification set in after a few days; part of the penis sloughed off, and gonorrhea was discovered; in some time symptoms of lues appeared, mercury was then had recourse to, and the cure completed.” Now the circumstance of this man being in a state of intoxication, and the general disease appearing on the next morning, and the local complaint setting in after some days, render it obvious, that the mortification was the effect of the general indisposition, manifesting itself in the penis, because it was in a morbid state; it appears that he had gonorrhea several times, and was never cured.

In Adam's Essay on Poisons, there are two cases of mortification of the penis, one from Mr. Brown, the other from Mr. Wadd; in the first it does not appear that any thing venereal was suspected; the first attack was an inflammatory redness, and pains in the legs, which having yielded, he was seized with a violent pain and tumefaction of the penis, which terminated in mortification, and afterwards got well without mercury. In the other, a Gentleman who had a chancre, and was under cure; after a debauch, his penis was swelled to an enormous size, accompanied with feverish symptoms, and a beginning sphacelus; mercurial frictions and bark were administered, a considerable portion of the prepuce and corpus spongiosum sloughed off, sufficient to leave the urethra bare; after some time it healed kindly. The first is an instance of the symptoms, without a venereal

cause; the other, of their having been produced by intemperance. Since the first edition of this work, a case occurred, which I think worthy observation. A Gentleman applied for advice immediately on discovering a small chancre, he was directed to rub a drachm of mercurial ointment every night, and to take a mercurial pill twice a day; after the third friction, his mouth showed that the mercury had taken effect, yet the sore increased in size, phymosis took place, the mercury was persevered in, and the complaint was aggravated; I saw him on the fourteenth day, when one half the glans and prepuce were mortified; he expressed great surprize at his condition, after having applied the remedy at the moment the disease appeared. This person was of a slender frame, and had eruptions on his face, which are vulgarly called scorbutic, his complexion very florid;

in such habits, disease of any kind usually assumes a violent form, and when it is necessary to exhibit mercury, cautions are necessary to insure its salutary effects, which in other habits are of less moment; purging should precede its use, and it ought to be applied in small quantities. I attribute the mischief to the neglect of precautionary means, which this man's peculiarity of habit required, and to the overdose of mercury.

It is evidently of the greatest importance to give an attentive consideration to such cases, as furnishing necessary cautions in the use of mercury, a medicine which produces the worst effects under many circumstances; and, indeed, the difficulty and embarrassment into which we are led, in endeavouring to account for the diversity of appearances attendant on venereal complaints, and on dis-

eases of the penis, seem to me to arise from the limited point of view, in which this question is considered, by writers and practitioners. Almost every untoward symptom is ascribed to scrofula in general, sometimes to an increased degree of acrimony in the infectious matter. Mr. B. Bell, in his work on the Venereal Disease, says, "that he thinks the phagedenic chancre is occasionally owing to the matter of infection having been particularly virulent; he concludes that it is so, from ulcers of this kind being more frequent at some times than at others; and from observing them, at the same time, in different people receiving the infection from the same woman. About two years before his publication, he met with more instances of this phagedenic sore, in the space of three or four months, than he had seen for several years before, and in four of them the infection was

traced to the same woman :—and that in a small town to which he was lately called on consultation, in a case of this kind, the surgeon informed him, that in the space of a few weeks, he had met with three instances of the same nature, in which the infection was traced to the same woman.” Were we to admit that Mr. Bell’s conclusion was well founded, it would shake some of our best established, and most universally received opinions, and materially influence the practice : an inquiry into its validity is, therefore, of moment. Arguments have been adduced already, to prove that the degree of acrimony in the matter of infection, is the same in every case ; that it is liable to dilution is certain, but still if it irritates, the disease will be produced, the action of which will be regulated by the scale of the constitution ; in support of this, there has been an

host of evidence founded on experiment, and so powerful and unequivocal, as to have established the principle beyond all question. Giving Mr. Bell full credit for the accuracy of his statement, still I feel myself warranted in rejecting his conclusion, because I conceive that the modified appearances he mentions, are to be accounted for, more consistently with the laws of nature, and of acknowledged principles. One would be disposed to think, *prima facie*, that there was an inconsistency in the evidence brought forward in support of Mr. Bell's character of the matter of infection; why did he think it particularly virulent? Because a certain number of men had violent symptoms, who had intercourse with the same woman; surely then it was the violence of the symptoms that gave *his* character to the matter;—by this same scale of Mr. Bell, the woman must have had similar

symptoms ; but if on the contrary, she had the disease in a mild form, this circumstance is fully sufficient to overthrow Mr. Bell's doctrine ; for although I can conceive that the person communicating, might have slight symptoms, and the person who received the infection, might have laboured under phagedenic chancre, arising from peculiarity of constitution ; yet, with Mr. Bell, an high degree of virulence in the matter, is necessary to produce an high degree of virulence in the disease ; and the legitimate inference from his reasoning, is, that phagedenic chancre is necessary to the production of phagedenic chancre. We know that a female with this form of the disease, must suffer severely, both locally and generally, and could scarcely admit of intercourse. The woman in question, could not have had the appearance of being on the sick list ; and when it is considered

that she had been so much in demand, one would suppose that she showed rather the features of health, and had the disease in a mild form, than that she laboured under foul, and spreading painful ulcers, which are invariably accompanied by a feverish state:

Presuming that the doctrine of increased acrimony of the infectious matter, as essential to the production of aggravated symptoms, can not be maintained; we must direct our investigations in some other course, and undoubtedly the state of the constitution into which the infection is received, and the incidental circumstances that influence it, are the only ways open to us. It would strike me as accounting more rationally for the aggravated cases that occurred to Mr. Bell, and to the country surgeon, to attribute them to a peculiarity of those patients' constitutions; to

some epidemic cause, or to the air of their places of residence being unwholesome ; and all this during the use of mercury. Had he proceeded a little farther in his inquiries, than merely as to the acrimony of the infectious matter, I am strongly disposed to believe that he would have found violent symptoms, accompanying other diseases, at the periods when he met the cases in question ; he observes that they are much more frequent at particular times, than at others. In page 26, I have quoted a case from the Edinburgh Medical Essays, of mortification accompanying gonorrhea, and setting in on the sixth or seventh week. On looking at the date of this case, I find that it occurred in 1730, at which time an epidemic raged through Scotland, which assumed a variety of forms ; is it not reasonable to think, that the aggravated state in this case, was produced by the pre-

vailing epidemic? it clearly was not the unusual virulence of the matter, because it was the mildest form of the disease that existed, and this too when the very extreme of mildness as to it, is usually expected, at the end of six weeks; this bears strongly on the point under consideration, and deserves particularly to be dwelt upon.

Dr. Adams seems surprised at Mr. Bell having related the cases mentioned, and others of aggravated symptoms, and says, it was not the venereal, but sibiens he was describing; or that the disease appeared differently in London and Edinburgh. He wrote in support of Mr. Hunter's opinions, and concludes from some cases he saw, that new poisons were springing up, as before observed by Mr. Hunter. The latter gives a case communicated by Mr. French, "in which an ulcer

of the glans on a Gentleman, known to have had intercourse just before with a woman of pleasure, destroyed the entire glans, and was rendered worse by mercury ; abscesses on the head attended, and the bones were carious ; however he got well after between three and four years, and it proved not venereal.”—

Although this, and some other cases mentioned by Mr. Hunter, are difficult to be accounted for, still I cannot agree in his conclusion, that new poisons are springing up ; we know that in some habits, once that the balance is destroyed by any means, a diseased state will take place, baffling all reasoning ; a scratch has often excited constitutional disease of the most distressing kind ; we often see thickening of the fasciæ resembling nodes ; matter formed under the periostium, destroying the bones in scrofulous habits ; and

many other appearances, difficult to be distinguished from venereal.

When such subjects contract the venereal disease, and require mercury; what have we not to dread? *Ingens diraque cohors malorum*. It is easy to conceive, that an highly scrofulous person, having a slight excoriation on the penis, and having connection with a female who had leucorrhea, rendered acrid, by promiscuous venery, or other causes, but free from the venereal disease, the sore would be increased, and that it would take on the scrofulous action, and this too, on a part endowed with the highest degree of sensibility, and with which the habit must sympathize; does it not follow, that scrofula would be brought into action constitutionally; and especially should mercury be used in large quantities, as is generally the case when an

untractable ulcer appears on the penis after a suspicious connection ; in this way we can account more consistently with the rules of pathology, for many of those cases in which mercury has proved injurious, and for the cases mentioned by Mr. Hunter, than by the unsupported and distant conjecture, that new poisons were springing up ; the frequency of ulceration of the genitals at all times, and the communication of their noxious effects by connection, are proved by many authorities. By the statutes of Jane I. Queen of both the Sicilies, which authorised brothels at Avignon, and which enjoin, “that the wenches should be examined by the Abbess and Surgeon on every Saturday, and if any of them had caught any illness, that they should be separated from the rest, lest the youths should catch their distempers.” These statutes bear date, 18th of August, 1357 ;

nearly 150 years before the venereal disease was discovered.

I am engaged at this instant, in an attendance on a patient, in whose case the deleterious effects of mercury are singularly manifest, although the disease is truly venereal. On my first visit I found him in a salivation, although only three drachms of ointment had been used in six frictions ; there was a foul and spreading ulcer on the penis, and a bubo suppurated ; he was of a delicate fabric, aged about forty, his health rather below par. I directed him to discontinue the use of mercury, and all medicine for a few days ; a poultice of oatmeal and beer, was applied to the ulcer, and a lotion of an infusion of chamomile was used twice a day ; so soon as the mercurial irritation subsided, it put on an healing appearance ; bark was then adminis-

tered in the dose of a drachm twice a day ; at the end of a month the sore was almost perfectly healed. As so little mercury had been used, and the local irritation subsided, I thought it seasonable to resume the use of mercury, and ordered frictions of half a drachm every night ; after two drachms were used, the features of the sore were changed, it spread and yielded a sanious discharge, and soon surrounded the penis ; the mercury was then discontinued, and strict attention paid to the local treatment ; a favourable change again took place, and after four or five weeks it was entirely healed. Pains seized on his limbs, blotches appeared all over his body, and inflammation attacked the left eye ; in this state I resolved to recommence the use of mercury, and to try some other preparation. He took of calcined mercury, and opium, each, a grain every night, which

seeming to produce no effect, the quantity of mercury was doubled, accompanied by a strong decoction of sarsaparilla and mezereon; this plan was persevered in three weeks, his pains growing worse, and the cornea lucida becoming almost opaque, I had recourse to frictions, beginning with a scruple, and increasing the quantity to two drachms each night; after he had used about three ounces, all his complaints abated gradually, that of the eye excepted, which remained stationary; the ointment was persevered in with little interruption for two months, in which time seven ounces were used; his mouth was little affected, but the noxious effects of the mercury were very evident, great debility and emaciation having taken place; the mercury having been laid aside, his general health gradually improved.

In this case, it is clear that the primary symptoms were aggravated by mercury, and that the secondary were ultimately subdued by it; the explanation of these phenomena which I would offer, is, that a morbid condition of body existed, which was paramount to the venereal action; this state was increased by the mercury, and showed itself in the ulcer, the moment the mercurial irritation was excited; the true venereal action will yield, when the mercurial manifests itself in the constitution, provided that the latter is judiciously brought on; and when the reverse seems to be the case, I am persuaded it is from the cause already suggested; namely, another state of parts having supervened, either from local irritation, or original morbid condition of body, or a disproportioned dose of mercury. All must agree, that mechanical injury inflicted on a venereal ulcer,

would induce a new disease, and change the features of the ulcer ; it is equally obvious, that the same state would be produced through the medium of the constitution ; the mercury agreeing so well with this man on the third time it was resumed, I am disposed to attribute to an altered condition of the habit, different from that which existed in the first instance. Mercury is highly stimulant, and we know that irritable habits, particularly when just removed from a state of health, can ill bear any stimulus ; but after ten weeks suffering, the habit became gradually accustomed to stimuli that it could not have borne at an earlier period ; the venereal irritation was also paramount at this time, the mercury therefore exciting an opposite action, became salutary ; there is every reason to believe that if its use had been persevered in before the ulcer was healed, the penis would have been

destroyed ; cases similar to this in all its leading features are not unfrequent. They are particularly noticed by Mr. Pearson in his late publication, who very judiciously forbids the use of mercury, during the phagedenic state. Such should serve as a caution to us, against the administration of mercury, when the symptoms exceed the ordinary character of the disease, and increase during its use.

Hunter mentions that he has often seen cases, in which symptoms resembling venereal occurred during the cure, but were not so ; when chancres were nearly healed, new ones break out near to the first, and put on all the appearance of a chancre, but he has always treated them as not venereal : he also remarks swellings of the glands in the groin, arising when the constitution was loaded with mercury, sufficient for the cure of the sores ;

such swellings he considered as not venereal, but occasioned by the mercury being introduced by the inferior extremity ; every practitioner of observation must be instructed by these practical remarks. Men of little discrimination, and who are not impressed by experience, decide in such cases that a recent infection has been contracted, or that the virus is still active, and increase the quantity of mercury ; sometimes the surgeon in attendance is censured, and another employed, who often advises a more rigid mercurial discipline, which in bad habits, proves highly injurious. I have witnessed the most deplorable effects from this practice ; healthy subjects escape the evil, and are said to have been cured in the second course, the first having failed.

It is certain that ulcers and other appearances resembling venereal, are often difficult to be distinguished ; diseases to which the constitution was predisposed, are induced during the treatment, from a variety of incidental causes. I have known venereal sores to be altered in their features from mildness to malignity, in irritable habits, particularly in females, from violent affections of the mind ; a lady was under a course of mercury for a large ulcer, after about seven weeks it was nearly healed, information was communicated to her of the death of a near friend, great mental anxiety and general debility took place, the ulcer opened, and spread beyond its original size.—Mr. Hume was called to see her, he thought that the original disease should be attended to, however, agreed to my recommendation, namely, that the storm which had lately been excited, should first be appeas-

ed; and as this event took place, the sore grew better, and ultimately healed, no farther attention was paid to the original complaint. Sudden changes of the weather would produce similar effects. Mr. Blizard in a paper on epidemical effects, in the second volume of Medical Facts, observes, "on a sudden shifting of the wind to the east, from the opposite point, I have seen almost every sore in the London hospital presently assume a bad aspect." On the 5th December, 1801, there was a smart frost at night, and on the ensuing morning, two patients applied to me with inflammation of the penis, which suddenly set in, on the preceding night; one of them had been between three and four weeks under the influence of mercury for the cure of chancres—the other I had seen but once before, he had applied nothing locally, except warm water as a lotion; they

told me that they felt great pain in the night, which they imputed to the frost, and which I am satisfied, was the occasion of the aggravation in both cases. Trifling sores on the penis are often enlarged, and bubos produced by stimulating local applications. A gentleman lately under my care, for a bubo and chancre, had used a considerable quantity of mercury, without producing any apparent effect; however, his bubo nearly healed, but the chancre, which was on the prepuce, proved obstinate: he was of a remarkably torpid habit, difficult to be excited, I therefore ventured to touch the sore with lunar caustic; it became inflamed, and a sympathetic bubo was produced; I directed that the antiphlogistic plan should be pursued, and strict confinement until the irritation abated. His friends (on hearing that new symptoms had arisen, and that he was to be again confined, after having been some

months under cure) excluded me from the attendance, and employed another surgeon; the new symptoms soon yielded, frictions in increased quantities were continued two or three weeks, and he was dismissed cured; but undoubtedly, the quantity of mercury used latterly, would have been insufficient, if an obstinate virus was to be subdued.

TREATMENT OF PHYMOSIS.

IN determining on the mode of treatment, which is adapted to this symptom, it is necessary to recal to our recollection the opinions I have advanced respecting it, and the facts upon which these opinions have been founded; namely, that the inflammation exceeds that which the venereal virus usually produces; this, most authorities allow: that it is often produced by external causes, also, when the venereal ap-

pearances are mild, and the antidote exerting its full effect ; that it accompanies gonorrhea occasionally, which is curable without mercury ; that it is produced by the bad air of hospitals ; and, that it occurs most frequently at these periods, when the state of the atmosphere gives rise to many diseases, and aggravates all ; nay, that it takes place wholly independently of the venereal poison, and that it was well known among the ancients, and before this poison was noticed ; in short, that it is an accessory disease, and so violent, as to require being remedied in the first instance ; and as it is admitted, that when an accessory disease takes place, it ought to be removed previously to attempting the cure of the original, every fundamental principle of the *ars medendi* establishes it, that this new disease is first to be attended to. It is a maxim of John Hunter, “ that two actions cannot take place in

the same part at one and the same time ;” to which I subscribe, for I consider it perfectly consistent with the laws of the animal economy, that one disease may supervene on another, suddenly or progressively, and the new action prevail so as to suspend the original ; although the *materia morbi* of the original, shall still exist, and produce its effects, after the accessory disease had been removed. Surely were Fever, Pneumonia, Catarrh, Cynanche tonsillaris, to attack a patient, known to be infected with the venereal disease, the mode of treatment in these diseases would be pursued, but no mercury, until after they had subsided.

A moment’s consideration as to the effects of mercury when the habit is impregnated with it, will convince us, that the worst consequences are to be dreaded from its use in

active inflammation of parts of loose structure, and disposed to sphacelate rather suddenly from any extraordinary excitement. Hunter says, "it produces universal irritability, making the constitution more susceptible of all impressions; it quickens the pulse, also increases its hardness, producing a kind of temporary fever; but in many instances it exceeds this, acting as it were a poison."

He also observes, that he has seen it exhibited in a sore throat, mistaken for venereal, and as soon as it affected the mouth, it brought on mortification. We every day see that in the mouth it produces violent inflammation, ulceration, and sometimes mortification; granting that these consequences sometimes attend its use, it is reasonably to be dreaded that it will precipitate inflamed parts, of such structure as the penis, into mor-

tification, and prove injurious in diseases of other parts, mistaken for venereal.

From this view ; namely, that this symptom is not occasioned by the virus, and that mercury is not only unnecessary, but prejudicial, I would reject its use *in toto*, and treat the complaint as common inflammation, demanding prompt and vigorous measures for its cure. The great functions of the penis, require that it shall be often distended, and for this purpose an extraordinary quantity of blood, is determined more frequently to it, than to any other part, and its return is in a great measure impeded ; this structure and its natural sensibility, dispose it to be rather suddenly inflated when irritated, and I think points out a leading feature in the treatment ; to lessen the determination of blood to the part, and to allay local irritation ; the former

will be best effected by blood-letting, and the other evacuations; the latter, by such applications as are refrigerant and sedative. If the symptoms run high, I take off a pound of blood at the onset, when there is no contra-indication, and I never find it necessary to repeat it; if the symptoms are moderate, I omit bleeding, and direct brisk purging in the day, and at night two grains of antimonial powder, and one grain of opium, in a pill, which latter I repeat after six hours, if the distress continues. The tongue is generally furred, skin hot, and pulse frequent; a state that forbids every medicine of the astringent kind, and, I think, opium also, unless its use is preceded by evacuations, and it is combined with antimonials or ipecacuanha in the proportion before mentioned. They who are subject to diseases of the hepatic system, are peculiarly liable to erysipelatous in-

flammation ; should the penis become its seat, which it is easy to conceive, may happen from the causes before-mentioned, surely evacuations are decidedly indicated ; and I have observed, that diffused inflammation of the penis is a more frequent disease in persons said to be bilious than in others ; I think that bark is by no means indicated. Inflammation of the testicle, often arises from the same cause as inflammation of the penis ; a stream of cold air will occasion both. Would any man direct bark or mercury in the former ? Surely not. Mr. Hunter advises bleeding and purging, and no mercury in inflamed testis ; yet he advises bark and mercury in its kindred affection, inflamed penis ; as this latter generally arises from a constitutional cause, and when it does not, is materially influenced by it, the great stress should be laid on the constitutional treat-

ment. The old authors appear to me to have had a more correct view of it than the moderns, and the practice of the former, to have been far more judicious than that of the latter. Van Swieten recommends repeated bleedings, and purging, and a strict antiphlogistic plan, as the only means of preventing mortification ; even should the phymosis arise from ulcers, he pursued the same plan with success.

Astruc says, that the only means of preventing mortification, is by quickly subduing the inflammation ; and he advises bleeding repeated every fourth or sixth hour, for the first day or two, and to avoid all stimulating applications ; he observes that it is always accompanied with fever ; he cautions, that the detergents which he recommends for the ulcers, should be of the mildest kind, lest

the inflammation should by any means be renewed ; after the latter had been completely removed, he desires that mercury should be given. Wiseman, and most surgeons of his day, treated inflammation of this kind by evacuations, whether ulcers existed or not, and gave very little mercury.

The difference between the practice of the British and French surgeons, is not a little remarkable ; the former pursue the invigorating plan, under the very circumstances in which the latter pursue the evacuating ; in Desault's works, we have many instances of erysipelatous inflammation, threatening gangrene, that terminated favourably by the use of purgatives ; the ammoniated tartar was the medicine prescribed. In one instance, a man who had a violent erysipelatous inflammation, occasioned by the bite of a horse ; the symp-

toms yielded to plentiful evacuations, but from taking food in large quantities, they returned, and put on a gangrenous appearance; they were again removed by evacuations. In these countries, bark and wine would have been the medicines recommended; the administration of this plan is productive of very great mischief. I believe that there are few cases of sudden inflammation to which it is adapted, and it requires the nicest discrimination to decide when it is; there is an important distinction between that state which threatens mortification, and its actual existence; bark and cordials in the former, and in young subjects, or in those who were not reduced by previous indisposition, are injudicious; the debility attendant on such cases, is of a temporary nature, the effect of inflammation and pain, and very often of bilious accumulation, which depresses like a poison;

under such circumstances, surely bark, &c. are contra-indicated, as calculated to increase the debility, by over-stimulating, whilst evacuations, by removing the burden, most effectually relieve the debility.

When we contrast the gross diet of Britons, and the humidity and cold of our atmosphere, with the light food, and dry and warm climate of France; one would be disposed to conclude, that the former were fitter subjects for evacuations, particularly by the excretions, than the latter; for it is apparent, that the *ingesta* will bear a much greater proportion to the *egesta*, with such food as we use, and in such a climate, than they will in a warm climate, and where the food is of a more light and perspirable nature; but it is certain that in France, the practice in com-

plaints similar to those in question, is directly the reverse of what it is with us.

I have often witnessed the best effects from spontaneous hemorrhage from the part, which is in general very considerable ; this first led me to appreciate bleeding highly in this symptom ; but when active inflammation exists, and we want an immediate effect, I know of no substitute for the lancet. The question arises here, whether general or local bleeding is to be preferred. I prefer the former, not only because I consider this symptom to arise from a cause that involves the constitution accessarily, but because the mode of taking away blood topically, is liable to strong objections. Before I conclude my observations on the constitutional treatment of phymosis, I am anxious to impress the opinion, that when a disease is produced through the medium of

the constitution, in whatever shape it appears, it is not *local*, and ought not to be treated as such ; inflammation of the eye, or of a limb, produced by an accession of cold, is wholly different from the like symptom, when brought on by external violence. It is certain that the habit will sympathize with a local injury, and the same treatment be required in both cases ; still the distinction for which I contend, is material, because in the former, the idiopathic disease possessing the entire constitution, renders the alleviation of the local mischief unavailing, which is proved every day, by rheumatism shifting its situation, and the constant relapses of inflammation of the eyes, when the stress is laid on topical applications ; whereas, in similar complaints, occasioned by external violence inflicted on the part, the constitution is often not disturbed, and when it is, it is only secondarily,

therefore, the stress should be laid on local treatment, which will often succeed alone. Sometimes general evacuations may be employed as auxiliaries. Inflamed parotids afford a satisfactory illustration of this question, they are very generally accompanied by inflammation of the testis, and sometimes by vomiting; Burserius says, "that these topical remedies are to be avoided, which are properly named *resolving*; for they either aggravate the pain and swelling, or occasion hurtful metastasis.

I wish to be understood as inculcating distinctly, that all cases of inflammation arising spontaneously, will be cured most speedily by constitutional treatment, and that the assistance afforded by local remedies, must be inadequate, are occasionally dangerous, and when the chief reliance is placed on them,

the time is wasted, which might be employed in the use of more effectual means. I have known instances of between thirty and forty ounces of blood being drawn off, in the course of a week, by leeches, with scarcely any advantage; and under similar circumstances, one half this quantity taken from the arm, has proved effectual; the reason of this is, that the loss of blood by leeches is so gradual, that the constitution does not feel its effects, and has time to accommodate itself to the loss, so that sufficient alteration as to the diseased action cannot take place, which latter is the desideratum. Whereas the sudden depletion that attends general bleeding, produces this alteration, which is so essential to the removal of the disease; the debility at which so many practitioners startle, is but temporary, and I contend is advantageous in general; and even in the most unfavourable view of it, is

less to be dreaded, than protracted disease : although an immediate reduction of the strength does not take place after the application of leeches, still large bleedings in this way, must be attended with the same *remote* consequences, as if taken from the arm. If there was reason to apprehend that the loss of a given quantity of blood would lay the foundation of dropsy in a particular case, I cannot see what difference it would make, in estimating the mischief, from what part it was drawn, or whether it was denominated local or general bleeding ; it is the diminution of the mass that occasions the permanent injury, when the evacuation proves ultimately *hurtful*.

I knew an instance of death from inanition, the consequence of bleeding from the gums after the extraction of a tooth ; this was

local bleeding, with rather serious testimony of its being general also.*

Phymosis sometimes sets in when the patient is confined to his chamber; of this, I saw several instances during my attendance as one of the surgeons to the Lock Hospital; at a time when the sores were far advanced in healing under the influence of mercury, and there was every reason to expect that the virus was nearly subdued; the alteration for the worse, I attributed to the noxious effects of the mercury having commenced, of which I consider the occurrence of this symptom at this time, as evidence. In such cases, bleeding is seldom necessary; the use of mercury must be discontinued, the patient removed

* I purpose entering more at large into the consideration of local bleeding in a future publication.—Cupping appears to me to be far more efficacious than leeching, when the practice is admissible.

into good air, and the treatment already detailed, had recourse to, provided that the strength had not been too much reduced, in which state bark, in small quantities at the commencement, increasing the dose from a scruple to a drachm of the powder, three or four times a day, will be of service, avoiding its combination with aromatics and wine; the latter having the effect of quickening the action, without imparting strength.

LOCAL TREATMENT OF PHYMOSIS.

SEVERAL practitioners, Mr. B. Bell particularly, advise the application of leeches ; in addition to the reasons advanced in speaking of the constitutional treatment, I object to them, because the entire surface of the penis is inflamed, which state is always greatly aggravated by the bites of these animals, and during their application, and the after bleeding, it is kept a length of time in a state of irritation, and the patient teased with a tedious process, so as to preclude rest for many hours ;

how much more convenient and beneficial would it be, to take the same quantity from the arm in a few minutes, avoiding all those causes of irritation?

In the year 1803, I saw a patient whose penis was mortified; the account he gave was that he had a small chancre, and that he used mercurial frictions twice, a drachm each time; inflammation set in suddenly, to relieve which, three leeches were applied the day before; twelve hours after, mortification began in the part to which they adhered; the Gentleman who attended, advised mercury at this period, but was prevailed on to suspend its use for some time; the sore soon healed, and the patient refused taking mercury, and continues well these ten years.

Hunter directs, “that a solution of the corrosive muriate of mercury shall be injected between the glans and prepuce, in the proportion of one grain to an ounce of water, and to suffer it to remain in contact with the parts ;” these proportions will not admit of a complete solution, of course, some of the substance may be thrown up. In the same paragraph, he says, that he has his doubts as to the propriety of using any irritating injections in such cases ; this latter remark renders it abundantly clear, that he had no experience of their beneficial effects ; why then recommend them ? From theory alone. Surely it is fit then that we examine the theory ;—it comes simply to this, would an highly irritating application be advisable in inflammation, threatening mortification of any other part ? Surely not. On what principle then can it be applicable to such a state, when the

part diseased is more highly sensible than any other of the body ; one grain of the hydrarg. mur. cor. is insoluble in an ounce of water, and must prove highly irritating. I have known an instance of violent phymosis having been brought on by this application, when used to remove warts ; and allowing it to remain in contact with the parts, as Hunter directs, would be a more effectual means of increasing the mischief. Had Mr. Hunter advised this practice from experience, I would object to it with particular caution, but he expresses doubts that it is proper ; and it is of moment that the practical notions of so distinguished a surgeon, should be established, if well founded, or overthrown, if erroneous ; indeed, the recommendation and prohibition are expressed in such equivocal terms, that no rule of practice can be inferred. I am therefore anxious to stamp it with decided disap-

probation ; warm water, or milk, should be cautiously injected under the prepuce at the upper part, every half hour, and the discharge gently pressed out. As an external fatus, I have often directed a solution of the acetum plumbi, in the proportions of one grain to an ounce of water, first dissolved in a few drops of distilled vinegar, to be applied warm, and constantly by wetted cloths. I think that a stronger solution is not so well adapted ; parts in such an high state of morbid sensibility, can ill bear active applications of any kind, and the medicinal or noxious properties may turn upon judiciously apportioning the quantities ; Van Swieten used a weak fatus of this kind with great advantage ; finding that the part was frequently disturbed by renewing the application, I now direct the ointment of acetate of lead spread on linen, to be applied around the penis, as it requires to be

but seldom renewed ; it should be made in the following manner, to ensure a perfect solution, and consequent admixture of the acetate of lead ; one drachm should be dissolved in two drachms of distilled vinegar, and afterwards mixed with ten drachms of simple ointment ; the prescription in the different Pharmacopeias, to mix the acetate of lead with the ointment, is not judicious, as the acetate not being previously dissolved, cannot be perfectly mixed, and the spiculæ remain in a concentrated state ; confinement to bed should be strictly enjoined, and the careful suspension of the penis particularly attended to ; it should not be up to the belly, as Celsus directs, this situation is unfavourable to the free exit of the discharge, and distorts the part in some degree ; it should be merely not pendulous. I disapprove of hot aromatic fomentations, as they increase the determi-

nation of blood to the part, and promote its distension. Some surgeons recommend that the prepuce be slit up, as remedial of violent phymosis; in deciding on this practice, I would make this distinction; if the subject was very irritable, or unhealthy, and fever attended, I would disapprove of it; but if the contrary state prevailed, it might be done with advantage and without danger in some cases.

In Chronic Phymosis, this operation is scarcely ever necessary; the closest contraction will yield almost always to bathing in warm milk twice or thrice a day, endeavouring each time to draw back the prepuce, and to force the glans through it, which acting as a wedge, by perseverance will gradually dilate the contracted prepuce.

A case occurred some time ago, which will make me cautious as to operating in this affection. An old Gentleman consulted me about an itching and contraction of the prepuce, that had been coming on a few years; I advised that he should wash it frequently with water, from which he derived no benefit, I therefore ordered a lotion of eight grains of acetate of lead dissolved in a few drops of distilled vinegar, to which eight ounces of water were added; this proved of no advantage, it was doubled, and afterwards trebled in strength, without effect; mild unctuous applications were equally useless; he constantly urged me to operate, saying that every day he expected it would close up entirely, so as to obstruct the passage of the urine; I incised the skin at one side, and uncovered the glans; during three or four days it appeared free from irritation; he lived out of town, and

walked in and out every day, a distance of one mile and a half, on the fourth or fifth day, he was exposed to a shower of rain, and ran some distance, so as to irritate the wound ; inflammation and mortification took place within twenty-four hours ; when I saw him, it had every appearance of extending, and was accompanied by fever, his eyes were highly tinged with yellow, and his tongue furred ; I directed a scruple of jalap and three grains of calomel every day, so that four or five stools would be procured ; the evacuations were highly bilious, he took no other medicine ; a poultice of oatmeal and beer was applied, the integuments of the penis and scrotum sloughed off ; and I observed that as his bilious complaint grew better, a favourable change took place in the local affection : by a perseverance in purgatives he recovered. Here was a case of mortified penis, arising

solely from external irritation, aggravated by a deranged state of the hepatic system, and cured by remedying the general condition of the body ; had I followed the advice given in books, bark and wine, opium, &c. would have been the medicines, and especially as he was debilitated from age, original habit, and disease : and had he been young, how many would have contended that the venereal virus must have had a share in such a diseased penis.

A few years back a Gentleman who was under my care, and using mercury for the cure of chancres, received an hurt from a blow of a child's hand on his penis ; at the instant he felt excessive pain ; violent phymosis succeeded ; his friends brought a surgeon to see him ; on minute inquiry, we understood that he had a recent connection ; the surgeon, who possesses respectable talents, and has

considerable practice, advised mercurial frictions to commence instantly, to which I refused assent, contending that the mechanical injury was the cause of the then prevailing symptoms, and that the latter should be removed first, nay, granting that the late connection had a share in producing them. It was agreed that mercury should not be given for some days; after the bowels were freely opened, I ordered one grain of antimonial powder, and half a grain of opium in a pill, to be taken every fourth hour until the pain abated; on the next morning the distress was much less, and after forty-eight hours, a mild purulent discharge succeeded to that which had been ichorous; the inflammation gradually subsided, and his penis was restored to the state in which it had been before the accident; all surely that was required; and as this was effected without the antidote to the venereal,

virus, and as the exciting cause was manifestly sufficient to produce the complaint, it is abundantly clear that mercury was not indicated at this period; soon after constitutional appearances were discovered, mercury was then had recourse to with success.

I lately heard a Lecturer,* whose talents I highly respect, declare to his pupils, that when he commenced practice, he was in the habit, for some years, of giving mercury in cases such as I have been describing, and that the most destructive consequences attended; he said, that he pursued the practice because it was recommended by the most respectable authorities, and he had seen it employed by several surgeons of high character. This manly and ingenuous declaration enhances not a little, the value of this Gentleman's instruc-

* Mr. Kirby.

tions ; and when I reflect that this practice is taught by Hunter, Howard, and Swediaur, I am not surprised that it should be very much followed ; and taking these last mentioned facts, conjointly with the authorities before quoted, and other instances of the practice, I have been induced to republish these observations, and to dwell on this point, perhaps with a tedious minuteness, but which I have thought necessary in combating such authorities, and in explanation of my own views of the subject.

When the prepuce has sloughed, in consequence of mortification, particular attention is necessary in obviating deformity, or in removing the ragged parts ; as to the first, when an aperture is established, the tumefaction subsides ; the edges of the opening should then be brought together with sticking plas-

ter, which will very much diminish it, and prevent the glans passing through; when I discover confined matter, likely to make its way through the skin of the prepuce, I open it with a lancet, which prevents a circular aperture, and lessens the deformity.

In cases that require the removal of the jagged prepuce, a troublesome sore often attends, tedious and difficult to heal; this I think may be obviated or lessened, by particular attention to the manner of performing the operation; on examining the structure of the prepuce, we find it is composed of a double portion of skin, and hangs so loosely as to admit of great distension; a cut through it divides not only a double portion of skin, but considerably more, on account of its laxity and corrugations; hence the wound must present a surface of more than double

in this part, what it would in any other of the same extent and of dissimilar structure ; we should be guided then by this circumstance, in conducting the operations. We are aware what a difference the preservation or destruction of skin occasions, as to the expeditious or tedious healing of the sore in every operation ; our aim should therefore be, to lessen the quantum of skin to be wounded, with all possible care ; the best mode of effecting this, is, to have the skin drawn tight by an assistant towards the pubes and circularly, and not to cut it in a lax state ; in this way less of it will be exposed to the knife, than if it lay loose, or was stretched downwards, and the wounded surface will be small ; by this method sores of this description will heal kindly, provided that mercury is not administered, or that the patient is not confined in an hospital. Some surgeons lay hold of

the prepuce, draw it forward, and dissect it off; thus, an increased quantity of skin is drawn in the way of the knife, and unnecessarily wounded, which is a chief cause of the unkind appearance of such sores, and of the difficulty attendant on their healing; the complaint is almost always local, and aggravated by mercury, and the practice of correcting the habit by bark, &c. has no rational foundation.

PARAPHYMOSIS.

IT is immaterial as to the treatment of this complaint, whether or not it has a venereal origin ; it very often arises independantly of any such cause ; it consists in a folding back of the prepuce behind the glans, so that it forms a stricture, and refuses to return to its natural situation ; the manual manœuvre recommended for its cure in some publications, is to push back the glans with the thumbs, whilst with the fingers of both hands the prepuce is drawn forward ; I have always

considered this an awkward and incorrect method, and by no means adapted to the end desired ; and when it succeeds, it is by accident, as must appear on a close inspection of the case ; the glans is in its natural situation, the prepuce is not ; why then push back the glans, preserving as it does, its proper place ? And by so doing, the difficulty of relieving must be increased, as its base must be enlarged by pressing it back, and thus the replacement of the prepuce be impeded. The correct indication of cure, is to diminish the size of the glans, particularly at its base, so as to allow of the uninterrupted return of the displaced part, the prepuce ; and the rational mode of fulfilling this indication, is to lay hold of the glans with the fingers and thumb of the right hand, as one would hold a writing pen, and gently to compress it around its base, inclining it rather forward than back.

ward, with a view to rendering it small, and having lessened it, then, and then only, the left hand is to be applied to draw forward the prepuce ; this manœuvre, however, ought not to be attempted in the first instance, if several days had passed over, and the symptoms were violent ; under such circumstances, the prepuce should be divided completely through at each side, and allowed to bleed until the parts became flaccid, before the manual effort was attempted ; warm fomentations and poultices are contra-indicated in this symptom, as increasing the afflux of blood, &c. to the turgid parts ; in some cases, where the glans was near dropping off after several days neglect, I have merely divided the stricture, avoiding applying the hands ; the parts have recovered, and ultimately the prepuce was gradually restored to its situation.

PHAGEDENIC CHANCRE.

THIS description of sore is characterised by the successive formation of sloughs, so as to destroy the part on which it is situated ; when it occurs in patients labouring under the venereal disease, there is reason to fear that it may be treated injudiciously, in consequence of the opinion advanced by some, that it is occasioned by unusual virulence of the infectious matter ; this view of the complaint would naturally lead to the exhibition of the antidote to the infection, in increased

quantity. Mr. Benjamin Bell says, "that if the progress is not stopped by a judicious external treatment, combined with a proper course of mercury, sores of very considerable magnitude will be formed." In another place, he says, that it is the common practice to continue mercury in these cases, and even to give it in greater quantities; of which he disapproves, and advances arguments to show that it ought not to be given during this state; now, if we receive the opinion, that the aggravated symptoms arise from the nature of the infectious matter, it will encourage the practice of using mercury; how then can we reconcile the advice not to use it under these very circumstances? To which plan is the student to make up his mind? He says, "that when the inflammation runs high, and accompanies chancre, mercury ought to be given." Even Howard,

whose observations are, in general, highly valuable, strongly recommends mercury, and that the quantity should be a full one, internally and externally; he also mentions the uncommon virulence of the infection, in this symptom; both practitioners advise acrid topical applications, in concurrence with Hunter. When we reflect that the last attributes the aggravated appearances to peculiarity of constitution, and hesitates about the propriety of giving mercury internally; that he gives no particular instructions as to the treatment of phagedenic chancre; that Bell, although not satisfactory on the subject, still objects to mercury, during the sloughy state, and that Howard is decidedly in favour of mercury; surely, farther discussion is necessary.

The theory and practice, for which I have contended, in treating of phymosis, apply here ; namely, that phagedenic chancre is not a truly venereal ulcer, but a *supervening* disease, and that the habit liable to it is apt to suffer materially from the use of mercury ; an high degree of morbid sensibility is manifest in every such subject, which condition is invariably increased by mercury, and I have observed that a sloughy state, whatever might have been its original cause, is increased by this medicine. From this view of the disease, and of the remedy, as more particularly noticed in another part of this work, I am decidedly of opinion, that mercury is injurious in phagedenic chancre, and should be excluded entirely from practice, as an internal and external remedy. I know that several practitioners discontinue it for a time, and resume it on a change of appearances ;

in the opinion that it is dangerous long to withhold the venereal antidote ; to which practice I object for the following reasons ; once that a morbid condition of body has taken place, under the influence of mercury, that state, in such constitutions as we now speak of, will be continued a length of time, partly because it becomes habitual, from being slowly induced, and partly because the recuperative energy is so feeble in them, as to require a long restorative process, which mercury will readily interrupt, and in which it will soon show its deleterious effects ; hence the confused appearance of the sore, and the difficulty of its being so unequivocally characterised, as to fix the rule of practice ; all is uncertainty, whether the venereal or the mercurial action prevails ; experience has confirmed me in the opinion, that it is always the latter, or an accessory disease, that for-

bids the use of mercury ; to establish this point, is of the first importance, but it can never be effected, whilst the practice is pursued of discontinuing mercury for a few weeks, and resuming it after that time ; it is also the practice of some surgeons, to give acrid preparations of mercury, often in conjunction with frictions.

A few years back, a Gentleman consulted me, who laboured under a foul and spreading ulcer surrounding the penis ; although his mouth was very sore, his surgeon ordered him to continue frictions, and to take the corrossive muriate of mercury internally ; a carrot poultice was applied to the ulcer, his pulse was quick, skin hot, and tongue furred ; the local and general distress, hourly increasing, his surgeon was dismissed. I ordered that the mercury should be laid aside,

purgatives administered, and a pill consisting of one grain of opium, and two of antimonial powder to be taken at night ; so soon as his skin became moist, and the fever abated, the state of the ulcer improved, and healed, by pursuing this plan alone ; he was of an healthy and robust habit ; the surgeon had an high character, and I believe deservedly, and his experience was considerable ; the event showed that the error consisted in persevering in the use of mercury, during the feverish state, and the sloughing of the ulcer. When ulcers on the penis exhibit this character, the source will always be found in a morbid condition of the habit, or in local irritation, often in both conjointly ; at the commencement, before mercury has been used, evacuations are indicated, and a strict avoidance of irritation of every kind ; at this period, bark and the tonic plan are contra-indicated,

yet they are very much recommended, on the appearance of a slough, and if a favourable change did not soon take place, opium, cicuta, nay, even mercury, are given ; When it is considered that a change of the wind, mental excitement, intemperance, or any derangement, are sufficient to occasion a sloughy state, we should hesitate before we give astringents, or narcotics ; the latter are particularly exceptionable in the early stage of this complaint, and should not be persevered in, at any period, or in any case, if a favourable change did not soon succeed their exhibition, because, being possessed of deleterious properties, they must prove prejudicial, if unattended with salutary effects ; cases are recorded, in which cicuta was pushed to great extent, with the worst consequences, yet the mischief was attributed to the disease, instead of the intended remedy. So many

and various are the causes, upon which this sore may depend, that it is difficult to lay down any express rule, as to the treatment; I am persuaded that much mischief arises from following general rules in such cases; the state of the habit should be studied attentively, on its correction the improvement of the sore will depend. Burrowing sores partake of the nature of phagedenic; Mr. Abernethy says, decidedly, that these are not venereal, in which opinion I agree with him, but to a limited extent; namely, that they are not perpetuated by the venereal poison, and that they are aggravated by mercury, and may be produced by it; still they often have a venereal origin, and are to be considered as accessory diseases, requiring suitable treatment, but not embracing the removal of the poison, particularly as its antidote is found to be injurious under such

circumstances ; after such sores have healed, decided symptoms of the venereal disease will sometimes appear, and yield to the judicious use of mercury ; however, a perfect cure is effected with great difficulty in such habits. That sores which burrow, situated in the neighbourhood of the genitals, occur sometimes without a venereal origin, I am satisfied.

Having decided that the restoration of the health, is the chief indication, the means of effecting this, is particularly to be attended to. When phagedena, or a burrowing sore, is an early symptom, it is almost invariably accompanied by quick pulse, dry skin, furred tongue, and great pain ; hence the necessity of purging until the tongue becomes clean, and the anodyne and sudorific medicines, as directed in treating of phymosis ; if the distress is excessive, bleeding in proportion to

the strength, will be advisable at this early period; and in the more advanced stage, warm baths, and the soothing plan. In obstinate cases, a dry and warm atmosphere, particularly in the country, will be of material service; the only medicine I can recommend from experience, is sarsaparilla given alone; when it is combined with guaiacum, and the other ingredients that form the decoctum lignorum, the habit is too much excited, an effect that is unfriendly to an irritable condition. I also object to mercury in any form, accompanying sarsaparilla, on the same principle, and also for the reasons advanced before; namely, that this description of ulcer is not perpetuated by the venereal poison, and that it has not a venereal origin, in some cases; the effects of mercury appear to me to be of a different nature, from those that are produced by sarsaparilla; the former evinces

all the properties of an irritant, the other of a demulcent; hence the mercury will countervail the sarsaparilla, provided that the case forbids irritating medicines; that medicines of opposite properties, will produce effects, when combined, which separately, they would be unequal to, I am aware, and am satisfied, that this very combination I now forbid, is advisable in some particular cases of the venereal disease; but having witnessed the worst consequences from the use of mercury in every form, and finding that the records of practice, abound with similar cases, I feel warranted in insisting that its administration as an antisymphilitic, is improper in the treatment of the particular sore, and state of body, I speak of, whatever might have been the original cause. It is nearly two centuries and a half, since sarsaparilla was first brought into Europe, from the

Spanish West Indies, where it was deemed a specific for the venereal disease, and it has been much employed to the present day, extolled by some, and decried by others; it is reasonable surely to infer, from its reputation being so high at one period, and with so many practitioners, and being preserved such a length of time, although in a less degree, that it possesses valuable properties, and that its occasional inefficacy is to be attributed to contingent circumstances, similar to what happens in the administration of every medicine. The observation of Boerhaave, "that he knew no *remedy* but became *such*, solely by its seasonable use," cannot be too often presented to us. From my own experience, and what I have collected from the experience of others, I am of opinion, that the indiscriminate use of sarsaparilla, has brought it into disrepute, and that if administered in

appropriate cases, it will sometimes cure the venereal disease, and always in these cases, prove beneficial; the question arises here, in what description of cases is it, that its beneficial effects are to be expected? This leads us to inquire under what circumstances has it usually succeeded, as furnishing the only rational clue by which to be guided, for if it proves efficacious, only under *particular circumstances*, its failure in general use, ought not to invalidate its character; practitioners, I presume, are agreed that it is in irritable and weak habits, and such as mercury is found to prove soon injurious to, that the sarsa is most beneficial; mercury has been often laid aside, (although but a small quantity had been used,) on account of the symptoms being aggravated, and the health reduced, and a cure has been effected by the sarsa, where appearances were most formidable.

Dr. Harris, speaks positively as to its success in curing infants labouring under the venereal disease ; these facts furnish good ground for considering it medicinal in the venereal disease, in subjects that enjoy but feeble life ; and in prescribing it, it is material to be guided by this consideration, and not to undervalue the remedy, when it fails in an opposite condition of body.

The state of the digestive organs, is particularly to be attended to ; unless their healthy action be preserved, a favourable alteration in the ulcer, is not to be expected :—here the opinions and practice insisted on by Mr. Abernethy, are of great value ; he has often effected the cure of sores, that were supposed venereal, by remedying the state of the digestive organs, and since the publication of his opinions, I have pursued this practice with

more care than formerly, and ulcers and other complaints, strongly resembling venereal, have yielded to it. Although every judicious practitioner must have been aware of the importance of this principle, still it has been too lightly noticed by modern authorities, and our practice, in consequence, has been defective in a very material point.

The influence of the healthy, or diseased state of the stomach, on every part of the body, received full consideration from most of the old writers. Rega, in his valuable Treatise on Sympathy, gives the following apposite lines from Serenus Sammonicus. “*Qui Stomachum Regem totius corporis esse contendunt, niti vera ratione videntur: hujus enim validus firmat tenor omnia, membra et contra ejusdem infirmantur cuncta dolore;*” and from Helmontius, who says, *omne pro-*

pemodum sanationem morborum, (vulnera itemque ejusmodi chirurgicalia non excipio,) in stomacho ejusque duum viratu sollicitandam: namque sic etiam non raro defectus exteriores interno stomachi remedio tolluntur, alioquin externis pharmacis frustra tentati. I have heard the ingenious Dr. James Curry, Physician to Guy's Hospital, say, that he had met many instances of sores, that proved untractable to every local treatment, heal, on his remedying a disordered state of the hepatic system, and avoiding every local application, except what protected the part from irritation; his chief reliance is on mercury, usually administered internally, as a purgative and deobstruent; therefore, there is no disagreement between us; because, I object to the use of mercury as an antisyphilitic, it being necessary as such, to keep up its powerful and constant influence on the

system, which, in the sloughy state of an ulcer, is highly injurious ; but as I consider an healthy state of the digestive organs, essential to the cure of almost every disease, I can by no means be supposed to oppose its occasional use, in aid of this intention.

About eight months ago, I was consulted about a tumor on the left parietal bone, it was painful and sore to the touch, accompanied by night sweats ; as the patient had undergone a mercurial course about eighteen months before, for the venereal disease, the present complaints were considered to be a re-appearance of that disease ; however, finding that the tongue was furred, the appetite deficient, and a distressing sensation about the stomach ; I directed a course of gentle purging, which was continued about three weeks, and removed these complaints. I had often known

a course of mercury ordered in similar cases. I believe that sarsaparilla is friendly to the stomach, provided that the dose be duly proportioned, and I have witnessed such effects from it in scrofula, as dispose me to estimate it highly in that disease.

The venereal virus, and the long continued use of mercury, seem to rouse latent scrofula into-action, and it is in such cases, that the sarsa is acknowledged to prove most beneficial; a circumstance that affords evidence of its anti-scrofulous power; in using it, I prefer the decoction, in the proportion of about three ounces to two pounds of water; the patient to commence taking one pound each day for a week, and gradually increasing it to near three pounds a day; I disapprove of giving it in substance, accompanying the decoction, as being too mucilaginous, and

unfitted to the weak digestive powers of such subjects ; and holding in view the importance of preserving an healthy state of the stomach, &c. the food should be the easiest of assimilation, and of the least stimulating kind ; therefore, milk and vegetables, if not forbidden by Idiosyncrasy, form the best adapted diet ; animal food, jellies, wine, cordials, and what is called the tonic plan, should be used with particular caution in those irritable habits, because it is impossible that the digestive process can be perfect, considering the general feebleness, and the absence of exercise ; and as the stomach communicates directly by consent, and remotely too, whatever injuries it suffers, to every part of the body, what mischief have we not to dread from the use of the same quantity of food, in such a state of debility as I describe, as would suffice in a state of high health ; surely

an aggravated state of sores, that will yield to no local treatment ; yet, this course of giving nutritious diet of different kinds, and which, in the aggregate, amount to a great quantity every day, is very much pursued ; the remark of Lister, "*oportet enim cavere stomachi vexationi,*" is too little attended to ; and I am satisfied that the mistaken opinion, that diseases attended with debility, are to be combated, by nutriment in increased quantity, is productive of the worst consequences ; medicines also, of the cordial class, such as bark, should be given in small quantities, and at long intervals, when indicated in weak habits. As I conceive that the treatment of the constitution should be our chief aim, I have dwelt particularly on such points respecting it, as I thought were most likely to be abused.

As to the local remedies, my experience does not warrant me in saying much ; the fermenting poultice of so large a size, as to embrace the entire penis, is a good application in many cases ; however, it is sometimes found too irritating, and its weight is distressing ; under these circumstances, an ointment composed of one part of the ung. elemi and four of the ung. cerœ, may be substituted with advantage ; it is a good mode of applying it, to melt it in a spoon, and pour it into the sores ; this is adapted to the sloughy state ; In obstinate sores that do not slough, I use the ung. hydrarg. nitrat. mixed with six parts of the ung. cerœ ; applications that are more stimulating, are apt to prove mischievous in all sores of this part ; these ointments should be blended together, by the assistance of heat.

Ambrose Peerey, who was a sagacious observer ; remarked, “that acrid applications should be used with great caution, for fear of a gangrene, which easily happens to that part ; and that we ought to begin the cure of all ulcers of the penis, with the general remedies for ulcers ; for that all ulcers of that part, arising from copulation, are not virulent.”

In every disease of the penis, a bandage should be worn, extending below the glans, so as to cover and protect the entire penis from external irritation ; the scrotum should be suspended in a bag truss, to which the bandage for the penis ought to be attached ; I would recommend it in the smallest chancre, and am satisfied that often it will make the difference between the preservation, and the loss of part of the penis ; in gonorrhea,

which comprehends inflammation of the penis, it will be of advantage ; a state of rest is of the first consideration in the removal of inflammation, wherever situated, the penis is particularly exposed to a contrary state, when the patient is not confined,—hence the necessity of countervailing the ill effects of exercise, by every possible means. The moment a chancre puts on an irritable appearance, confinement should be strictly enjoined, otherwise, no treatment will succeed. The many instances I have witnessed of exasperated symptoms, arising from the neglect of rest, and of these local attentions, urge me to be thus particular in enforcing them, as very material auxiliaries, in preventing the untractable and distressing symptoms of which I treat. Venereal patients seldom yield to much restraint, during the treatment of recent sores on the penis, and usually

pursue their accustomed habits, diet, &c. regardless of the morbid change, which a virulent disease must produce on the part, and an active medicine, on the constitution; thus, we can satisfactorily account for the failure of the best advice, and for the untoward symptoms that prove so embarrassing in this stage.

I believe it is the usual course of practice, to commence the administration of mercury, after the exasperated symptoms had subsided, so that time should not be lost in subduing the virus; to which my experience obliges me refusing assent, having met several cases, in which the mischief was renewed with increased violence, in consequence of this practice; a case has been communicated to me lately, of a person labouring under a foul ulcer of the penis, in the treatment of which

the surgeon discontinued the use of mercury, until the sore became of the size of a pea, it was then thought advisable to give mercury; on its administration, the features of the sore were immediately altered, and it spread, so as to destroy a great part of the penis. It has been a rule with me, during the last twelve years, never to resume the use of mercury in those cases, until after the sore was cicatrized; and in subjects with whom mercury disagreed very much, I have withheld it, and waited for constitutional symptoms, and in some instances the disease never returned, which I attributed to the removal of the virus *in limine*, by the sloughing, ~~as happens in~~
~~chancres~~

VENEREAL BUBO.

THE first objects for our consideration, when examining into the nature of disease, should be, the structure of the parts concerned, and the ordinary course of disease in parts of similar structure ; the seat of bubo is the groin, where some small glands are imbedded in cellular substance, liable to irritation from all motions of the thigh, and from many of the trunk ; that sores in this part, should often prove difficult to be healed, is obvious, and is observed every day in scrofulous chil-

dren, who labour under abscesses in this part, and free from the venereal virus ; a diseased state also of the glands about the neck, parts of similar structure, proves extremely obstinate ;—hence, suppurated bubo may be considered as peculiarly liable to become an untractable sore, independently of the poison, and when this cause is present, the aggravating circumstances must be increased.

The *circumstances* next to be attended to, are, the unusual morbid appearances, and the treatment to which they most frequently yield ; as I intend limiting my observations to the aggravated form of disease, I shall pass over the ordinary state, and suppose that suppuration has taken place, and the matter evacuated, the discharge becomes ichorous, the edges ragged, and the ulcer spreads, and sometimes becomes gangreneous, accom-

panied with quick pulse, hot, dry skin, and great anxiety; in other instances, the edges become callous, and are tucked in, sometimes having corresponding sinuses; in some cases they exhibit the character of herpes exedens, and extend to the ileum, and downwards to the verge of the anus. As to the treatment, I learn from every authority, and from my own experience, that these sores are aggravated by mercury, to a dangerous degree; it is evident from the observations of Mr. Hunter, that he did not consider the venereal poison, as supporting the morbid state in these cases; "he gives an instance of a Gentleman who had feverish symptoms, and a swelling took place in his groin; Mr. Hunter, from the history of the case, declared firmly, that it was not venereal, in which opinion the patient had no faith; his friends sent their surgeons to him, who, not

knowing Mr. Hunter's opinion, thought it venereal, and recommended mercury ; Mr. Hunter reasoned, that allowing the chance of the disease being venereal or not, to be equal, his state of health, which was bad prior to the swelling in his groin, precluded the use of mercury ; he therefore advised sea bathing, with a view to strengthen his constitution, and if the disease in the groin proved to be venereal, he would then be in a proper condition to go through a mercurial course. He used sea bathing, suppuration took place in one of the glands, it healed with a poultice of sea water, &c. and after a few weeks he was perfectly recovered."

"He mentions another instance, in which a great quantity of mercury had been used, and the bubo had no disposition to heal ; the mercury was laid aside, and the restorative plan was pursued for some time, yet the sore

became much worse ; doubtful, whether there might not be still something venereal in the sore, he advised mercurial frictions to be again tried, but the advice was neglected ; however, a favourable change took place, without medicine, and the sores healed. Swediaur mentions instances of ulcerated bubo's, that were exasperated by mercury, and the attending practitioners advised that its use should be continued, but on his recommendation, they agreed to discontinue the mercury, and the event justified his advice, the bubo's having healed.

In a work on the venereal disease, published in the year 1780, by George Renny, Surgeon, there is a remarkable instance of the deleterious effects of mercury, on ulcerated bubo, in an irritable habit ; I extract the case in full. “ A. M. Soldier, aged

24, reported 1st October ; his symptoms were a bubo in the left groin, coming to a suppuration, and one in the right, which had been opened some weeks before by incision, when in the country, and which was nearly healed; his look was pale, and habit a good deal reduced, in consequence of the mercury he had already taken ; directions were given for his continuing in the mess, and poulticing the bubo, which brought it to complete supuration in the space of a week ; 9th, taken into the hospital, and had the bubo laid open, by cutting out a circular piece from the centre, by this time the right groin had healed up, and as every symptom wore a favourable aspect, he was ordered to rub in two drachms of the mercurial ointment the second night, subsequent to the operation ; 12th, the sore looked much worse, and discharged a vast quantity of a thin ichorous matter, of a very

offensive smell ; this increased considerably the two following days, and as every appearance seemed to indicate an approaching mortification, the course was immediately changed, and the cortex prescribed to the quantity of a drachm every four hours, mixed in port wine ; notwithstanding the bark was persisted in with the greatest attention, the ulcer continued to spread daily, and the virulence of the matter was such, as to excoriate the perineum and surface of the scrotum, to such a degree, that the patient could with difficulty endure the vast pain which succeeded ; in this situation, the bark was thrown in, to the quantity of sometimes four ounces a day, mixed in port wine, which the stomach retained ; two grains of opium were given at bed time, and the decoction of the woods was taken for common drink ; the diet consisted of rich soup, beef, mutton, or fowl ;

which were varied according as they suited the fancy of the patient at the time. Until the first of November, the symptoms were one day better and another worse; those which were favourable, seemed chiefly to be brought on by the bark, which regularly failed of success, if not increased in quantity. At last the stomach began to nauseate the powder, and then the decoction was given mixed with port wine, in as great a quantity as possible. The ulcer on the left side had now gone so deep, as to lay all the inguinal glands bare, which projected into the sore and were of a florid red colour. The pulsation of the artery below could likewise be observed, and if the virulence of the matter had not been considerably abated, by the vast quantity of bark thrown in, nothing could have prevented the coats of the artery from being eroded;—the sore on the right side never went so deep,

although its circumference was nearly the same, viz. about eight inches; the spirits of the patient in this lingering state were surprising, his principal complaint arising from the excoriations of the scrotum, which were always very much relieved by frequent fomentations with warm milk and water, rubbing the parts afterwards with the unguentum saturninum; his pulse never exceeded 93 in a minute, at any one period, and was always moderately full; 13th, about this time it was proposed by a gentleman of the faculty to try the effect of a small dose of calomel along with the bark, which might tend in some degree to correct the acrimony of the discharge; accordingly two grains of calomel were ordered at bed time for three nights successively; on the morning of the 18th every symptom seemed evidently much worse, his discharge being greater and of a more offen-

sive smell ; it was therefore immediately laid aside, and from this day to the middle of December, he took only the decoction of bark, joined to an opiate, morning and evening, the greatest attention being paid to the support of the strength, by the free use of port wine, and a nourishing diet ; 18th Dec. the discharge had now lessened very much, and the pus was become much milder and of a proper consistence, so that about the middle of January, both ulcerations were completely healed, and he obtained a complete cure without any farther administration of mercurials. This patient, from beginning to end, took between five and six pounds of the Cortex, and upwards of seventy bottles of port wine, which no doubt must appear an astonishing quantity."

Whilst I respect the abilities of Mr. R. very highly, and am willing to bear testimony to the merits of his publication, as to some points, still I think that the practice in this case calls for some comment; this man was in a feeble state, and every judicious practitioner knows that the secret in the use of stimulants, is, to proportion them duly to the powers to be acted on; gentle stimuli will invigorate, when the more active would enfeeble or destroy; were the powers of life nearly exhausted, a small quantity of wine might revive, whilst a larger dose would prove destructive,—hence great caution is necessary in conducting what is called the tonic plan; at the commencement the quantity should be small, and increased gradually; it would seem to me, that Mr. R.'s patient was over dosed, and the aggravated state having continued about two months under this treat-

ment, was rather a discouraging circumstance, and I would by no means recommend the less experienced to follow the practice in a similar case, so far as the administration of bark and wine in the same quantities; under the management of Mr. Renny, every thing was to be expected that superior talents could promise, and the practice corresponded with the prevailing doctrine at that period; the mode of opening the bubo, by cutting out a circular piece, is also liable to strong objections in every case, but particularly in the present, the subject of it being in a debilitated state at the time, and this debility the consequence of mercury too; the violence of the operation in such a condition of body, was a sufficient cause of the aggravated symptoms that succeeded; the use of mercury also so soon as on the second night after, must have greatly increased the mischief.

On the whole, I consider this case instructive, in as much as it exemplifies the necessity of abstaining from the use of mercury, in ill-conditioned bubo—that this medicine is highly injurious in every stage of such a sore, and that it is curable without the remedy. The liberal and intelligent surgeon, who treated the case, is aware, I rely, that I would be culpable, were I not to mark my disapprobation of a practice, which I thought objectionable, uninfluenced by any feeling towards the practitioner concerned.

The 13th volume of the Medical and Physical Journal, contains an interesting communication from Mr. Cumming of Romsey, on this subject; “a young countryman, labouring under a bad ulcerated bubo, consulted him; the discharge was excessive, and the habit emaciated, he had taken a large

quantity of pills, which occasioned an excessive purging ; the pills were left off, and the tonic plan, and a generous diet, pursued by Mr. Cumming's directions ; at the expiration of a month, finding the discharge from the bubo still ichorous, without any amendment in appearance, (it still exhibited an inflamed margin, with a white sloughy bottom,) the ointment was recommenced, and a drachm rubbed into the affected side ; after one week's perseverance in this medicine, colliquative night sweats commenced, the mercury was laid aside, and the regimen before directed, confided in ; the local treatment consisted in graduated compresses, and a tight roller ; under this plan, this obstinate sore ultimately healed."

Another instance is given of a medical acquaintance, who had a chancre, succeeded

by a bubo ; he treated himself by rubbing in small quantities of ointment, with a view to its discussion ; however, suppuration took place, the discharge was great, and assumed a virulent aspect ; he again had recourse to mercury, and took calomel with opium ; before he had taken twenty grains, he found himself worse in every respect, and had profuse night sweats, with a train of nervous disorders ; he was advised to abandon the use of mercury entirely, and to confide in a tonic course of medicine and diet, which restored him.”

Mr. Abernethy's cases also merit particular attention,—ulcerated bubo, succeeding to sores on the penis, and healing without mercury ; these facts surely must suggest to the medical observer, views of this symptom, different from those which have been

heretofore inculcated ; namely, that bubo even accompanied by ulcers on the penis, is not always characteristic of the venereal disease, and that its aggravated state is no evidence of the virulence of the infection.—Why a venereal ulcer in the groin should resist the medicine, to the use of which, venereal ulcers on other parts almost invariably yield ; nay, that it should change its aspect, from mildness to malignity, whilst the acknowledged antidote to the poison was administering, and on the disuse of this medicine, alter its appearance for the better, is a problem difficult to be solved, and that invites inquiry ; the circumstance clearly admits of the practical inference, that in many cases of ulcerated bubo, mercury ought not to be used. Mr. Abernethy is of opinion that such cases never had a syphilitic origin, but were produced by a poison of a different kind. The

opinion I have formed is, that in general they originate from the syphilitic virus ; but, that the poison in these particular instances, had proceeded no farther than the groin, the inflamed and obstructed state of the lymphatics, not having admitted of absorption, and the sloughing having destroyed them ; in this way the virus was cut off *in limine*, leaving a common sore to be acted on by the mercury ; an event which is admitted as taking place in some cases of chancre ; this conjecture, I presume, is more consonant to the laws of pathology, than that sores on the penis, and bubo, succeeding to intercourse with suspicious females, were not of syphilitic origin.

The cases to which Mr. Abernethy gives the name *pseudosyphilis*, seem to me to have been produced by the syphilitic virus, and modified by the constitution of the patient ;

their ultimate cure having taken place without mercury, does not decidedly warrant the conclusion drawn by Mr. A——, that they were not syphilitic, for although in general, the venereal virus will not disappear without the aid of medicine, still I can conceive that its effects upon the constitution may cease in some cases, as happens in other diseases.

Gonorrhea sometimes cures itself, to which the structure of the diseased part is favourable; the entire constitution in the whole, and in every part, defends itself against disease, and often successfully; scrofula, a disease seemingly of the same system (the lymphatic) as the venereal, makes havoc during infancy, vanishes at the approach of manhood, and shows itself again, should feeble life be produced by disease, or lapse of years. There

are many instances of diseases that have resisted medicine a length of time, yet yielded spontaneously ; cases of confirmed lues have occurred to my observation, in which the source of infection, and the appearances, left no doubt ; yet some of the parties refused taking mercury, and continued for some years ailing, but ultimately recovered. We know that opium, bark, and the nitrous acid, have been said to cure the venereal disease, and instances of their success have been brought forward ; although I do not allow that these medicines possess anti-venereal properties, I can conceive that the constitution may be so regulated by their use in some particular cases, as to become enabled to subdue disease ; symptoms characteristic of the venereal infection having disappeared under their influence, where no mercury was employed, is a circumstance entitled to particular attention,

and shows, either that the disease is curable without mercury, or that the appearances which characterise it are very uncertain; that sores are sometimes produced on the genitals without a venereal cause, has been observed from the earliest periods, but that such sores will communicate infection to another person, which will extend to the constitution, and exhibit appearances there similar to the disease known in Europe about 300 years, is what I very much doubt; symptoms resembling those that are produced by the venereal poison, sometimes occur in scrofulous subjects, abscess in the groin, destruction of the uvula, and disease of the bones; but they do not arise from absorption through the genitals. When ulceration shows itself first in the parts last mentioned, and constitutional symptoms succeed, I conclude that it is true syphilis. Sores occasioned by

want of cleanliness or excoriations, may produce sympathetic bubo, and also irritate a female locally, but no farther ; of this I have had experience. Where there has not been illicit sexual intercourse, I believe, that the instances of constitutional appearances, resembling venereal, are very rare, and when such occur, I would attribute them to infection having developed itself, that had been latent in the habit.

The important question arising from what has been premised, is, ought we in cases of bubo, to depart from the course of treatment usually pursued ? Certainly we ought. Mr. Hunter says that bubo is undoubtedly a local complaint ; Mr. Abernethy says, that it is not syphilitic, when not preceded by chancre ; it has often occurred accompanied by ulcers on the penis, phymosis, without a ve-

nereal origin ; its nature therefore must be frequently doubtful, and we have abundant proof, that when it has been produced by the venereal poison, mercury, the antidote to this poison, aggravates it, although it relieves, and cures every symptom, showing itself elsewhere. This is experience, profiting by which, I would recommend that the use of mercury be abstained from, in every case of bubo accompanied by much inflammation, or a scrofulous habit, and unaccompanied by proof of the habit being infected.* The consequence of attending to this practice will be, that dormant scrofula will never be unnecessarily aroused, which often happens from the abuse of mercury, and that the *true nature* of the complaint will appear,—a desideratum of in-

* If time and experience shall prove this practice successful, it will lead to the disuse of mercury, in every case of bubo unaccompanied by proof of constitutional disease.

calculable importance, and indispensable to successful practice; also, the embarrassment, to which a spreading ulcer, and broken down health, under the use of mercury, give rise, will be avoided; the suspicion, that a combination of scrofula and syphilis, so often entertained, will have no foundation, and the practice of laying aside the mercury for a while, resuming it again, fearing that the virus may extend its ravages, will have no encouragement; from the latter, I have witnessed many as destructive cases, as these already quoted, in which, the event proved that mercury was not only unnecessary, but the chief cause of the mischief. In a truly syphilitic case, the virus will be developed, if mercury is totally abstained from; then the remedy can be administered with confidence. Mr. Abernethy's experience has induced him earnestly to recommend delay, in

doubtful cases; to this cautious proceeding it may be objected, that should the disease prove to be venereal, it may take deep root, and extremely difficult to be cured. Allowing the objection its full force, it is outweighed by the considerations mentioned; and when it is recollected—that the progress of the disease can be arrested in a very short time—that highly beneficial effects are to be expected from mercury, where it had not been previously used, and the facility of managing a clear case compared with a doubtful one, the objection is light indeed. Hunter observes, “that recent venereal complaints are generally more difficult of cure than the symptoms of lues venerea, and that it is nearly as dangerous to give mercury, in some constitutions, when the disease is not venereal, as to omit it in other cases which are really syphilitic, and that many of

the constitutions which put on some of the venereal symptoms when the disease is not really present, are those with which mercury seldom agrees, and commonly does harm ;” this experience of Mr. H. bears strongly on this point, and would be sufficient to cast the balance in favour of my recommendation.

I have attended several cases of suppurated bubo preceded by chancre, in which the use of four or five drachms of mercurial ointment was succeeded by an alarming change in the ulcer, and an irritable and feverish state, which rendered it necessary to discontinue the mercury, and attend to the new symptoms, by which attention, a favourable alteration took place in the bubo ; the mercury was never resumed afterwards, and after a lapse of several years, the patients remained free from disease ; in a few cases

I abstained entirely from the use of mercury, intimidated by the naturally morbid condition of the habit; an aggravated state of sore never occurred, the bubo healed like a common abscess, and the event was the same as in the former cases.

A Thesis de Lue Venerea, published at Edinburgh in 1786, by N. Elcock, contains the following note, which I consider entitled to attention, because the writer was not a Tyro, although candidate for a degree, but an experienced medical observer, having been many years an eminent apothecary before he obtained a medical degree. “*Bubonum criticæ naturæ mihi exemplum contigit observare. Quidam Peregrinus ex meis familiaribus hoc morbo laboravit, insigni inflammatione et glandem et preputium occupante, ab iis profluvium largum erat, inse-*

cuta est Phymosis, et dicrum sex spatio utrumque inguen dolore cæpit; detractus est ei sanguis, et sale Glauberi soluta alvus; noluit autem ille, ne spiritus ex eo fæterit, hydragyrum assumere; bubones succreverunt, et Phymosis decessit; glande retecto, ulceribus obsessa sunt omnia quæ glandem circumjacent; hoc in modo perseveravit ille, partes affectus magna cura emundans aqua vegeto minerali. Bubones ad suppurationem perducti sunt, et sua sponte rupti; penis cito omnino vitii expers evasit: Bubones quoque in spatio sex quasi hebdomadam sanati sunt; nec extrinsecus adhibuit aliquid nisi aquam-vegeto mineralim. Adeo autem debellatus est morbus, et per integrum annum, scilicet, quamdiu in nostra insula commoratus est ejus redintegrationis ne minimum indicium esset, igitur verisimili est, quod effluvium e bubonibus omnia secum abstulit.” This case

was considered venereal, but whether it was or not, it is evidence of the accredited symptoms of the disease, in an intense degree too, and consequent to suppurated bubo, being removed without mercury.

It is worthy remark, that during the continuance of any sore on the penis, even after a course of mercury, conducted in the most judicious manner, bubo will arise—of this I have met cases. Ten years ago, a gentleman rubbed upwards of ten ounces of ointment for the cure of chancres; a small one was not completely healed, when he went into company and danced; the sore became inflamed, and a bubo was formed, which suppurated: alarmed at this new symptom, he wished to take mercury, with which I refused complying, because the full effect had been produced by what he had used during strict confine-

ment : the bubo healed speedily, and he has continued free from disease. Such cases scarcely ever require mercury.

As to the local treatment of suppurated bubo, my experience inclines me to advise, that it be suffered to burst in general, unless that great pain is occasioned by tense skin, in which case an opening is advisable to be made by art, and I prefer caustic to the lancet.

In ordinary cases, every purpose is answered by the constant application of a poultice ; in the spreading ulcer, one prepared of oatmeal and beer is often of great service. I disapprove of the practice of removing the lips, either by the knife or caustic ; also of dilating sinuses, when the matter has free

exit, and the habit is irritable; but when the matter is confined, and the parts are indolent, dilatation is necessary.

In some cases, the edges become callous and tucked in; the sore continues stationary a length of time: I have seen the hydrarg. nitr. rub. sprinkled daily on these sores in unmeasured quantity, the ill effects of which must be obvious. When this preparation is mixed with ointment in the proportion of two scruples, finely levigated, to an ounce, it will often be found serviceable; but poultices embrace a greater extent of parts, are a constant focus, and, by absorbing the discharge, protect the sore from its acrimony.

In ulcerations of the herpetic kind, I have found great advantage from a dressing com-

posed of one part ung. eruginis, and twelve of simple ointment; in very irritable subjects it may be weakened still farther. The absence of exercise should be enjoined strictly, and good air esteemed as deserving the first place among the adjuvants. On the whole, the treatment pursued in phagedenic chancre is adapted to bubo, when it exhibits the same appearance.

In a conversation with Mr. John Pearson some time ago, on the subject of abstaining from the use of mercury, in very irritable or scrofulous habits, when labouring under bubo, unaccompanied by symptoms of the constitution being infected, this experienced and judicious surgeon expressed his concurrence in the opinion for which I contend.

ULCERATION OF THE FAUCES.

AMONG the exasperated symptoms attendant on the venereal disease, a spreading ulcer of the fauces demands particular attention ; as, in some cases, a sloughing of the uvula, and destruction of the palate and bones of the nose, take place. When this state succeeds to the use of mercury, the treatment is rather embarrassing, on account of the difficulty of distinguishing between a venereal

and a mercurial sore ; the most sagacious have been deceived as to this point.

I can conceive that the mercurial action may prevail to-day in the throat, and cease after some days, and then the venereal action take possession of the part ; because the medicine and the disease have a manifest tendency to show themselves in this particular place. In either case, topical applications fail of having full effect, often because they do not come in contact with the ulcer, a great part of which is concealed from their reach, and cannot be touched by a gargle, being prevented by the uvula acting as a valve in its relaxed state ; the act of gargling also contracts the passage, and shuts the opening into the lower part of the fauces, so that the pharynx, and all that part of the palate that is posterior, is untouched by the remedy.—

To obviate this disadvantage, I direct the lotion to be drawn up the nose, until it arrives at the pharynx. In this way the entire arch is cleansed, and the application comes in contact with the ulcer at every point, the same membrane lining the nose and pharynx.

When the sore is venereal, I order two grains of the corrossive muriate of mercury, dissolved in seven ounces of water, and one ounce of mell. rosæ, to be used twice or thrice a day; and when it is not venereal, this is an useful application, provided that there is no inflammation, which is generally the case.

By this mode of using the lotions, I have succeeded in preventing the loss of the uvula and palate, in several cases that threatened this truly distressing event; and I would

advise its general adoption.—Syringing is sometimes practised; but it is ineffectual, because the fluid cannot be forced through the nose over the arch, to reach the pharynx. Fumigation is preferable, but less effectual than snuffing up the lotion, which is to be ejected from the mouth, and which gives a certainty of its having been in contact with the entire of the parts ulcerated.

As the consequences of ulcers of these parts spreading, are deplorable in the extreme, the most speedy means of healing them should be resorted to; and it is to be regretted that our most respectable authorities have afforded so little assistance in this respect. The entire stress is laid on the constitutional treatment, which, notwithstanding it shall be conducted with judgment,

still is too slow in its operation to arrest the progress of the ulceration, in these delicate parts; and when mercury is used in large quantities, the palate, &c. seldom escape being destroyed, even when true syphilis prevails. Therefore, when the use of mercury is advisable, it ought to be regulated so as to produce a gentle effect.

A young gentleman of the medical profession laboured under an ulcerated bubo, which spread considerably under the use of mercurial frictions. They were discontinued, and the sore amended gradually. After a few months it healed, and he removed to the country, where the throat became ulcerated, accompanied by febrile symptoms. The means of relief pursued having proved ineffectual, I was brought to see him, and found him greatly emaciated, pulse small and

quick, and skin parched; the uvula was so relaxed as to impede deglutition, its edges ulcerated; no benefit was derived from gargles. The seat of the mischief seemed to me to be out of the reach of applications in the usual way, and I considered the case venereal. I ordered the lotion already mentioned to be snuffed up the nostrils, until it reached the pharynx; then to be ejected through the mouth; and half a grain of calomel, and a grain of antimonial powder, to be taken night and morning. This practice soon proved successful, and he took no other medicine for six or seven weeks; the quantity of calomel was increased, after the constitution became habituated to it. On discontinuing the pills, he commenced the use of sarsaparilla, which he continued about a month; and has remained free from disease ever since, about seven years.

A case has lately been under my management, which, on account of the unusual circumstance attending it, I am anxious to communicate;—

In the summer of 1811, I was consulted by a gentleman, who laboured under the venereal disease nearly ten years, without taking any medicine for its removal. The appearances it exhibited were leprous scales covering the face and head, and several parts of the body; an enlargement of the bones of one leg, pains in the bones, and emaciation. The account he gave was: that the disease appeared, at the commencement, on the penis, to which it seemed confined a year; buboes succeeded, and disappeared spontaneously; his throat became sore two years after, and got well on using a common gargle; the soreness returned frequently, and

was removed by similar means ; during between four and five years, the symptoms were stationary, slight sores on the penis, and tumefaction of it, being the sole complaints ; after this time, pains in his limbs, and blotches on some parts of his body, came on, and were the chief symptoms that continued. He had abandoned himself to despair, and concealed the nature of his complaints from his friends, having no view whatever to recovery.—I directed half a drachm of the usual ointment to be rubbed every night ; and after two drachms had been used, the mouth became sore ; the medicine was intermitted two nights, and afterwards persevered in, so as to keep up a tenderness of the gums for several weeks. The symptoms progressively abated ; the mercury was increased in quantity gradually, and after three months, two drachms per day

were used ; the course was persevered in four months, during which time he rubbed twelve ounces, and from the first four frictions, the powerful effect of the mercury was uninterruptedly sustained ; the fifth month, he took from one to two grains of calomel per day ; and, the month following, drank sarsaparilla decoction. He has remained in perfect health two years.

This is the only instance I ever met of the venereal disease being left to itself a length of time, sufficient to unfold all its destructive powers, unresisted ; yet the mischief was not so great as might be expected. It shifted its situation from the throat, without the aid of medicine, and ultimately settled on the surface ; with the exception of a diseased state of the bones of one leg, its ravages made little progress, and it seemed stationary an

extraordinary length of time.—It is worthy remark, that this deeply-rooted disease yielded to a small quantity of medicine, and was finally removed by little more than is found necessary for the cure, when of but a few months standing. Such an opportunity of ascertaining the progress and effect of the venereal poison, I believe, seldom occurs, as it is, almost in every case, occasionally restrained by the antidote.

This case appears to me to warrant the inference, that the effects of the virus, abstractedly considered, are not so destructive as has been imagined; and would incline us to attribute the ravages on the constitution, that are daily witnessed, to the co-operation of contingent circumstances; such as the deleterious effects from the abuse of mercury—irregularities of the patient—influence.

of the weather, inducing accessory diseases, all conjointly deranging the health, and so enfeebling the constitution, as to favour the progress of the virus.—What an host of ills do we not every day witness, from the infection in diseased habits! Surely, then, when a similar condition of body is induced during the treatment, similar effects are to be expected.

I conclude hence, that when mercury fails in curing, it tends to the aggravation of the disease; and considerable experience has satisfied me, that in all cases, in which mercury had not been used, the cure will be effected more readily and certainly, than where it had, but ineffectually. I am aware that the virus will, in many cases, produce great mischief in subjects apparently healthy; but I know also, that this distress will be much alleviated

by the soothing plan of treatment, before mercury is employed, except when the bones are affected; in which case the structure, and not merely the virus, gives rise to the distress.—It has often occurred to my observation, that the violent symptoms have abated, to my surprise, whilst I have been preparing my patient for a course of mercury: which circumstance instructed me, long since, not to be hurried into the use of mercury by violent appearances, in all cases; but to try the effect of regulating the constitution on general principles: and I feel assured that this attention will often lead to the successful effect of mercury.

ON THE USE OF MERCURY, SO AS TO
ENSURE ITS SUCCESSFUL EFFECT.

IT is to be collected, from the preceding part of this work, that I attribute the aggravated state of the venereal disease to the mismanagement of the means of cure, in a great measure. This arises from the nature of these means, from the fault of the patient, and from the deficient skill of the practitioner.

Mercury, on account of its character as a specific, invites speedy employment; its use is attended, in the first instance, with a degree of morbid sensibility, that renders the habit peculiarly liable to be acted on by any cause of disease. A state of body, in which mercury is prejudicial, very often prevails at this period; still it is used, by many, in unmeasured doses, *scarcely* ever proportioned to the attendant circumstances; so that its injurious effects are very probable,—its sanative, *scarcely* possible. The patient, concealing his situation, renders him liable to many inconveniences; whilst he pursues his cure, his business, and his amusements, endeavouring to make them square with each other; the two latter expose him to the vicissitudes of the weather, to exercise comparatively too much, and to a state of repletion and excitement; whilst the constant use of

mercury debilitates, and invites adventitious diseases—Hence the antidote to the virus fails of its salutary effect, because it is not the mere venereal irritation it has to counteract, but a new morbid action predominating, that requires its appropriate treatment.

This is evinced by the circumstance of our finding it necessary to suspend the use of this medicine, when the constitution becomes involved in any other disease, such as fever, pneumonia, phthisis, scrofula, scorbutus, or gout. During the predominance of any of these complaints, mercury would be inadmissible, although the venereal poison existed.—After the new irritation has been removed, and the venereal alone prevails, then the beneficial effects of the antidote are to be expected, on the principle that the constitution being free from any disease, except

that for which there is an antidote, the full antidotal power may then be exerted uninterruptedly.

We constantly meet with patients, in whom the health is so much impaired, from the treatment of the venereal disease, that all medicine is left aside, and they are removed into the country, where the health is improved, and the diseased appearances are in a great degree removed ; after returning to town, the remaining symptoms yield to a small quantity of mercury,---an event that excites great surprise. The explanation that occurs to me of this success, is, that an healthy condition of the body having taken place, from good air and the absence of mercury, the effects of the virus became proportionally less ; and the renewed use of mercury was favoured by a strengthened

constitution, and a weakened venereal irritation—hence a slight mercurial irritation produced its effect, as explained in page 181. For I hold it as indisputable, that the nearer the constitution is to an healthy state, the weaker will the effects of the virus be, and the more easy the cure—*et vice versa*; but this state is rarely met with, and continues but a short time under the abuse of mercury.

Accessory diseases may be slight, and therefore unattended to. However, in any degree of them, a state of body prevails, unfavourable to the anti-venereal effects of mercury; and as this state must be induced, in a great majority of cases, of patients who pursue their business and their amusements, I conclude that the failure of mercury may be often ascribed to this cause. Very few venereal patients conduct themselves other-

wise than as I represent, and we know that very few are cured in the first instance. After some time, secondary symptoms show themselves, in most cases that have been treated under such circumstances ; then confinement is usually determined on, and many of the obstructing causes are avoided ; still the venereal virus often continues unsubdued, after a full exhibition of mercury.

The failure in these instances I attribute to the recommencement of the medicine too soon after the former use of it, before the morbid action, which had been induced under its use the first time, perfectly ceased : consequently the same morbid effect heretofore insisted on, is perpetuated, and the anti-venereal effect is not produced.

The want of skill in the practitioner has

also a principal share in rendering the treatment unsuccessful. They who contract the disease, seldom consult a qualified person at the commencement; all is ambiguity and embarrassment, when the latter is applied to; the patient will seldom consent to delay the use of mercury, and too many practitioners advise it immediately. In many instances, at this period, the morbid effects of mercury, or an accessory disease, prevail:—hence the consequences before contended for, and failure of the anti-venereal effect, from the continued use of mercury.

I have very often witnessed the practice I condemn; namely, the perseverance in the use of mercury, in increased quantity, when the cases were equivocal, by surgeons of high reputation and great experience.

Having endeavoured to account for the want of success that so often attends the use of mercury, I propose to point out the most likely means of ensuring its successful effect. It would appear, that reversing the procedure I have censured would obtain this end ; however, a detailed account of the course of treatment will afford a more satisfactory explanation.

The venereal infection is generally, though not universally, received on the penis, where it appears in the form of an ulcer. The usual practice is to touch the sore with caustic, and to administer mercury, with the intention of protecting the habit from the effects of absorption.—With respect to the first, my opinion is, that the virus may be removed, in the first instance, by the caustic, in cases which show the disease soon after

it has been received, because it may be near the surface ; but if many days have passed over before ulceration has taken place, there is reason to apprehend that a superficial application of caustic will not remove the virus.

As to the use of mercury, it seems a reasonable thing to apply the antidote to a poison as soon as possible ; but having had abundant experience as to the effects of this medicine, it is our duty to ask, has the virus been generally subdued by this practice ? What answer does experience give ?—I believe, a negative one. Were it successful, secondary symptoms would very seldom occur, because mercury is employed, almost universally, on the discovery of the infection ; yet few are cured in the first instance---I believe not one-fifth. But this is attributed

to the irregularity of the patient, exposure to cold, free living, &c. &c.---Granted: these things are unavoidable, and will almost constantly happen. Experience proves, then, that the use of mercury does not protect the habit from the effects of absorption; and that the attendant circumstances, taken altogether, render it ineffectual as to the cure of primary venereal symptoms without confinement.

Does not this warrant us in departing from such treatment, and in making farther trial; and the rather as the point under consideration is of great importance,—because, if mercury does not render the benefit expected, it does mischief, by inducing a state of morbid sensibility, unfavourable to its farther use, and to the ultimate cure. Therefore, holding firmly in view that the *summum bonum* is to preserve the constitution

unimpaired, I propose that mercury never be given, whilst there is any obstacle to its salutary effect likely to attend, and that the avoidance of business, pleasure, and change of the weather, be strictly complied with; nay, unless confinement to the patient's dwelling is observed, and they who cannot conform to those conditions, had better not use mercury, but content themselves with frequent ablution of the sores, as every half hour, dressings of simple ointment and careful application of bandage; under this management, I have known sores to heal that were thought to be venereal; * and the worst

* A Gentleman has been under my care often for gonorrhea, in whom an ulcer is always visible at the entrance of the urethra, the disease is removed without mercury; the same state, I believe, often takes place, particularly when hæmorrhage occurs; the innoxiousness of gonorrhea is ascribed to the mucus surface; which is destroyed by ulceration; therefore, there must be some farther reason for it. I think that besides being blended with the mucus, the frequent ablution by

that can happen will be, that secondary symptoms will appear in a comparatively sound state of body, which I contend, affords the best prospect of successful treatment ; it may be asked, is there not danger that the local sore will spread and destroy the part ; the answer is, that this happens every day, under the use of mercury, to patients who walk abroad, and often under confinement—that mercury increases the evil—that it generally arises from adventitious causes—that the character of the matter of infection is, not to exceed a limited distance, and to be rather

the passage of the urine, prevents the *remora* of the matter, and the permanent mischief ; in imitation of this, the frequent removal of the matter, should be a first consideration in every recent sore ; although Morgagni and other diligent inquirers in Morbid Anatomy, have not found appearances of ulceration, still they have been observed. Dr. Baillie has met with them, and it is easy to conceive that after a lapse of years, such appearances might have been effaced in a part constructed like the urethra.

circumscribed in its action; and I am satisfied, from experience, that the spreading is remedied in early, and in most remote cases, by the antiphlogistic treatment, and that it will scarcely ever occur, when mercury is not used, and strict temperance and rest are observed; should a sore increase under the proposed regulations, its *real* character will appear, and mercury not having been used, and being *new* to the constitution, will, for these reasons, have a far more powerful effect.

Chancre and bubo being local, afford still farther reason to expect that they may be sometimes removed without the aid of general remedies, as happens in gonorrhea, even when accompanied by ulceration.

When constitutional symptoms render the use of mercury indispensable, it is required,

to ensure the anti-venereal effect, that a number of circumstances shall correspond, of which, failure in any, will lessen, or defeat this effect; I hold it as necessary, that the venereal irritation be paramount, and that every other disease be absent or quiescent; but how seldom is this the case? and how seldom are cures easy and effectual? Guided by these considerations then, the absence of the obstructing causes before alluded to, is essential during the employment of mercury, as an anti-venereal—business—pleasure, &c. must be abandoned, confinement to the house enjoined, but not to the chamber; the situation should be healthy, an attention of the utmost moment. In full habits, purging, and the antiphlogistic plan, ought to precede; in all, inflammatory symptoms must be combated first;—in very irritable habits, a scruple of the ung. fortis, is enough to be used

every night for a week, and increased, according to the effect, by degrees ;—large quantities at the commencement, excite too much, and encourage the developement of diseases, to which the habit was predisposed, also, conduce to accessary diseases ; the mercury likewise, must be intermitted on this account, perhaps so long a time as to protract the cure—these disadvantages do not attend small quantities.

It is the practice of some, to give mercurial pills whilst the ointment is using, of which I disapprove, partly because of the increased dose, and partly because it exhausts our resources too soon. I keep them on the reserve, and if the intended effect is not produced after four or five ounces of ointment have been used, I order them during the remainder of the course, or after the unction

is left off, to continue the mercurial action some time longer ; by keeping them on the reserve, I am enabled to avail myself of their aid when necessary, which could not be done, if the constitution was habituated to them, from their being employed early. I scarcely ever direct more than half an ounce the first week, *although*, during the course, I often order very large quantities. I am induced to dwell on these particulars, knowing that great reliance is placed on large doses of mercury, and believing that the intention is often defeated by the use of such quantities ; dreadful consequences also occasionally ensue from the practice.—Some time ago, a Gentleman rubbed one drachm and a half twice a day, from the commencement ; on the second week he was attacked with nervous symptoms ; the same quantity was persevered in, convulsions ensued, and terminated his life, I believe,

about the sixth week, with all the symptoms of the mineral poison ; this treatment was under the direction of a Gentleman in respectable practice.

In debilitated subjects, whether the symptoms are mild or violent, small doses should be used ; and such only will be successful, and the judicious adaptation of the dose to the constitution, and to its particular state at the time, is the *sine qua non* of the cure.

I observed in a former part of this work, that I do not accompany mercury with the decoctions, but keep the latter on the reserve, because their effects being restorative, I think it advisable not to exhaust them, with the view that should the health suffer, or sores prove untractable during the course, then they may be employed to an advantage, which

an early use of them would have precluded ; in this, I depart from the usual practice.

On the whole, the desideratum as to effectually curing the venereal disease, is, to preserve a steady, equable condition of body, and the predominance uninterruptedly of the mercurial irritation, during the exhibition of the remedy,—an union of circumstances of difficult attainment ; which difficulty, I consider the source and occasion of the embarrassment, and disappointment, that so often attends.

I have endeavoured in the course of these Commentaries, to direct the attention to such means of accomplishing the end in view, as experience and much reflection warrant me in advising. I am persuaded that were practitioners to enter into a resolution, against

administering mercury in venereal cases, unless confinement was submitted to, that benefits would result to society of incalculable importance,—the aggravated state of the disease would seldom occur ; it would be radically cured more frequently, and its dissemination prevented, so as to lead to its extinction—what a benefit to mankind at present—what a blessing to future generations !

Whilst I so earnestly insist on confinement, I am not to be understood as disallowing all exceptions ; I am aware, that some very delicate subjects will be benefited by gentle exercise, and exposure to the air occasionally, in warm and dry weather ; and that persons of regular habits, who would avoid all causes of interrupting their cure, will sometimes recover, without confinement ; but, in the cure of the venereal disease, to render as-

surance doubly sure, should be our anxious care, as involving considerations of the deepest interest.

In a late publication, by Mr. Mathias, on what he denominates the Mercurial Disease, the ill effects of mercury are very judiciously commented on; he attributes the mischief altogether to the mineral producing a specific diseased action; I attribute it partly to the same cause, but principally to the invasion of new diseases, or the developement of old ones, which are occasioned by mercury, when it induces debility, or a derangement of the general health; we know, that an injury from external violence, will sometimes bring on old complaints, to which the habit had been predisposed. When the constitution has suffered much from the small pox, a diseased state of the lymphatic system, and of

the bones, often succeeds. I attended a woman some time ago who was struck on the head with a stick, the cranium became diseased, and the health impaired—tumors formed on different parts of the head, resembling nodes, caries of the bones took place, and she continued two years in a miserable condition, several abscesses having extended about the head and neck.—Dr. Ferrar in his Treatise on the Conversion of Diseases, mentions, that a case occurred to him, in which nodes on the shin bones, and venereal pains in the heels, came on immediately after a fit of acute rheumatism, in consequence of a pox, contracted several months before,

The experience of every practitioner, I presume, bears testimony in support of the opinions I have advanced—the morbid effects

of mercury are constantly shown in the mouth, but they are not of long duration, and notwithstanding they commence soon in this part, and are kept up during the cure, still they do not continue (with few exceptions,) any length of time, after the mercury has been left off, and there is a good reason to expect, that when they cease where their force was directed most powerfully, that they will cease elsewhere :—therefore, I conclude, that although mercury gives rise to the disease, it does not perpetuate it, but as before observed, encourages accessory diseases, and the revival of any that were latent, when used so as to derange the general health.

APPENDIX.

STRICTURE OF THE URETHRA.

SUCH is the distress attendant on this complaint, and so fallacious every means of removing it, that the suggestions of every practitioner are needed, towards the improvement of its treatment. The practice so long established of dilating the stricture by bougies, has been supplanted of late, by the application of caustic, which has been recommended in modern times, by Mr. Hunter,

and its superior efficacy particularly insisted on by Mr. Home ; from every information I have been able to collect from extensive practitioners in England and Ireland, I learn, that this practice is often attended with inconveniencies, that forbid its general adoption ; in very irritable habits, it usually excites such distressing symptoms, as to call for its being relinquished ; and it often fails in removing the disease, in those who submit to its full effect. In many cases in which it succeeded, the length of time required to persevere, was very considerable ; I have therefore directed my attention for some years back, to the mode of cure by dilatation.

The object in view, is to remove a partial enlargement, or thickening of the membrane that lines the urethra, and this is to be done on the same principle, that a similar effect is

produced on other parts—pressure we know fulfils the intention; but its application to the urethra, so as to accomplish the end, is a matter of great difficulty, and in general, the practice as ordinarily pursued, fails of affording permanent relief, the disease in most cases returning after it has been discontinued; however, the success, although temporary, is instructive; showing, that the complaint is remediable by such means, and encouraging the expectation of their finally succeeding;—we are led then to examine the treatment, as it is usually conducted. A bougie, which is formed of slips of linen covered with plaster, is introduced into the urethra, where it remains a few minutes every day, the size is gradually increased, until the stricture is dilated sufficiently to allow a large one to be readily passed. I have known many patients to have been several months under treatment

in this way, and derived benefit. Some practitioners leave the bougie hours in the urethra with good effect, but a complete cure scarcely ever takes place, which I attribute to want of firmness in the bougie, as it soon becomes soft, and to the shortness of the time it is continued in the urethra; were it even of a firm consistence, a full effect from pressure, could not be produced by its application for so short a time; this process also increases the sensibility of the genital system, and disposes them to inflammation, spasm, &c. The patient usually goes abroad, and is exposed to changes of the weather, exercise, &c.—hence, whatever advantage is derived from the temporary introduction of the instrument, is overturned by these incidental occurrences, which is evinced every day in innumerable instances of the recurrence of the symptoms, after frequent applications in this manner,

long persevered in. To effect the intended purpose ; namely, to keep up an uninterrupted pressure, an instrument that would not dissolve, and would preserve its power of resistance, and might remain constantly in the canal, is to be desired.

The experience I have had of the elastic gum catheter, removing strictures of the most obstinate kind, when employed in cases of fistulæ in perineo, first led me to think of it, as adapted to the cure of ordinary stricture. I have succeeded in curing fistulæ of this description, in a number of instances, and several years have elapsed without any return of the complaint. I considered the success attributable to the use of this instrument steadily persevered in ; in some of the cases, the strictures had existed between twenty and thirty years ;—now, as this is the worst des-

cription of the disease, because the canal must be impervious, or nearly so, before it is ruptured, it is reasonable to expect that a slighter degree of it, would readily yield to the same means—it may be said that the ulceration attendant on fistulæ in perineo, conduces to the removal of the stricture, to which my experience answers, that I have frequently met more strictures, than that next the fistulæ, and all were cured; and in general the complaint is not confined to one part of the canal.

I commence the treatment by the common bougie, which I use for some days, until the urethra has become habituated to the irritation, I then introduce the elastic gum catheter, which I leave constantly in, gradually increasing the size to the largest; the patient being strictly confined; this instrument is

lighter than the solid bougie, and can be borne with more ease, and as it need not be removed to allow the urine to be discharged, the pressure is never a moment interrupted; so that if any thing can be gained by the temporary pressure of the solid bougie, which must be frequently taken out—surely fifty fold is to be expected from the permanent effect of the hollow one; and experience has satisfied me, that a perseverance in this practice, will be productive of more advantage, in most cases of stricture, and attended with less inconveniencies, than any other plan that has been hitherto devised.

In treating fistulæ in perineo, I seldom find it necessary to lay open the abscesses, and am of opinion that this operation may, in most cases, be dispensed with. Mr. B. Bell strongly recommends, that they be laid

open in all cases ; certainly, when urine is extravasated, dilatation, to afford it free exit, is indispensable.

I attended lately, two cases of extravasated urine, in which the scrotum and penis were prodigiously distended ; I made a deep and long incision in the most depending part of the scrotum, so as to afford a free discharge to the urine, and future sloughs.—When the sore assumed an healthy appearance, I brought the sides of the wound together, and retained them by adhesive plaister, which greatly expedited the healing. I disapprove of several scarifications, as by doing a violence to parts that might remain entire, and allowing the urine to come in contact with the wounds, they favour the formation of sloughs ; this is prevented by one free incision—the former may occasion a separation of the integuments

of the scrotum and penis, and denudation of the testis, which the latter will prevent; immediately after the operation, I endeavour to introduce a gum catheter, if I do not succeed, I introduce a bougie, which I leave in the urethra, as long as it can be retained—a continuation of this practice, produces a discharge from the urethra, and dilates it so as to admit the catheter, which is to be worn constantly, until no urine passes externally, and some flows by the sides of the instrument—it is impossible to follow Mr. Abernethy's advice, to make the incision down to the aperture in the urethra, because the diffused fluid, by distending the cellular membrane, renders it impracticable to ascertain in what part of the urethra the aperture is; we can have no guide therefore, but the same that should regulate us in every case of a similar description; namely, to fix upon the

most depending, or the most prominent part, in the latter, the skin is usually thinnest, and ought therefore to be preferred, because nature points thither. Hippocrates observes, “Ea quæ educenda sunt, duci debent per conferentia loca, quo maxime tendit Natura.”——

MORBID RETENTION OF URINE.

WHEN a surgeon is applied to, to relieve a patient labouring under retention of urine, he is urged to evacuate the bladder, speedily as possible; as the success or failure of the usual operation, may depend on the proximate cause of the retention, it is of great importance, first to ascertain, whether it has arisen from stricture, or is independent of it—in the first case, we know that the canal is rendered impervious by inflammation having supervened on a diseased part; here, the

introduction of a catheter, would be attended with great difficulty and danger, and ought never to be attempted, in the first instance—bleeding, purging, and the warm bath, the last long continued, should precede, which often prove effectual. I have ordered, (when I disapproved of the catheter being immediately resorted to) after the evacuations, one grain and half of opium, and two of antimonial powder in a pill, to be repeated once after three hours, if necessary, with complete success;—should these means fail, the smallest catheter ought to be introduced without the wire, which will often reach the bladder, or enter the stricture, where the urine was impeded, and *make room* for it to flow, and do no violence to the inflamed parts; if it does not pass, a bougie of the same size is to be introduced, until it meets resistance, then it should be tied and kept in

the urethra, and in many cases in which the order of treatment I have stated, has been followed, I have known the urine to flow, on withdrawing the bougie, an hour or two after its introduction.

In the event of these means failing, which I think, ought to be pursued in every case of retention accompanying stricture, such preparation will have been made for the introduction of the catheter, as will facilitate its passage, and very much diminish the danger.

When this complaint attacks old men, or is the consequence of paralysis of the bladder, the catheter is to be immediately employed; and it is not a little remarkable, that although under the last mentioned circumstances, the urethra is free from disease, *still* it often happens, that the instrument can not

be introduced into the bladder by some hands, and by others, it will suddenly enter, as if the canal and sphincter were perfectly free ; from which it would appear, that the impediments to its passage, so often experienced, are not to be imputed to the diseased state of the canal, or to spasm, but to the want of adroitness in the operator. Some time back a gentleman in the country, eighty years old, was suddenly seized with retention of urine, an experienced surgeon was foiled in several attempts, during two days, to pass the catheter, and the case was abandoned as hopeless ; another surgeon was sent for to town, who passed the instrument in a few seconds, and met with no difficulty ; some other instances have occurred, in which the same surgeon succeeded in a similar manner, after respectable practitioners had been repeatedly baffled in their attempts—hence, it is evident

that efforts to overcome resistance by force, are not adapted to the end in view, and that in conducting the manœuvre, our chief aim should be to follow the line of the urethra with exactness. This leads to the consideration of the instruments.

Mr. Ware in an ingenious paper in the Memoirs of the Medical Society, recommends a catheter, considerably curved. Mr. Hay, whose remarks are highly valuable, approves of a large curve—the ingenious John Bell, thinks a simple curve is to be preferred—my experience inclines me to prefer the former, and I should expect that an instrument of the exact shape of the urethra, would be better adapted to following its course, than one otherwise shaped, in this I agree with Mr. Ware. The directions given by Mr. Hay, for the introduction, so exactly

correspond with my own notions, that I shall take the liberty of transcribing them.

“I commonly introduce the catheter, with its convex side towards the abdomen ; and having gently pushed down the point of the instrument, along the symphysis pubis, till its passage in that direction is stopped by the curvature of the urethra, I turn the handle of the catheter towards the navel, pressing at the same time its point against the symphysis pubis ; without this pressure, the point of the instrument is apt to recede, and in that case it does not readily enter the membranous part of the urethra. In making the turn, I sometimes keep the handle at the same distance from the patient's abdomen, and sometimes make it gradually recede, but in either method, I avoid pushing forward the point of the catheter any farther than is

necessary to carry it just beyond the angle of the symphysis pubis ; when I feel that the point is beyond that part, I pull the catheter gently towards me, hooking as it were the point of the instrument upon the pubis, I then depress the handle, making it describe a portion of a circle, the centre of which is the angle of the pubis. When the handle of the catheter is brought into a horizontal position, with the concave side of the instrument upwards, I push forward the point, keeping it as close as I can to the interior surface of the symphysis pubis ; for when passing in this direction it will not hitch upon the prostate gland, nor injure the membranous part of the urethra.”—The surgeon who keeps these instructions in his recollection, will have the surest guide ; I have only to add, that if the catheter is left pretty much to take its own course, gently assisted,

holding in view that the point is to be guided first downwards, and then upwards, by depressing the handle, it will always enter the bladder, under ordinary circumstances. The surgeon should stand between the patient's legs—he cannot have the same command, if he stands by his side.

It would be an improvement in the catheter, if the apertures were circular, instead of oval, as the latter form admits of the wire slipping out, which has been productive of great mischief, it also weakens the instrument in that part, a disadvantage when endeavouring to pass it, without the wire;—no wire should be used that did not fill the bore of the catheter.

The many ingenious works on diseases of the urethra, &c. particularly those of Hunter,

Desault, Foot, and Sir Edward Home, to whose unceasing attention this subject is so much indebted, render it unnecessary to enter into observations in detail ; my intention is merely to direct the attention to a few points, in which I feel warranted by experience, to suggest some improvement.

